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# Theory of Subjectification in Gilles Deleuze: A Study of the Temporality in Capitalism

Boram Jeong

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THEORY OF SUBJECTIFICATION IN GILLES DELEUZE:  
A STUDY OF THE TEMPORALITY IN CAPITALISM

A Dissertation submitted to  
The McAnulty College and Graduate School of Liberal Arts, Duquesne University &  
École doctorale: Pratiques et théories du sens (Discipline: Philosophie), Université Paris 8  
Vincennes Saint-Denis

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for  
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

By  
Boram Jeong

August 2017

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Boram Jeong

2017

THEORY OF SUBJECTIFICATION IN GILLES DELEUZE:  
A STUDY OF THE TEMPORALITY IN CAPITALISM

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Approved July 12, 2017

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# ABSTRACT

## THEORY OF SUBJECTIFICATION IN GILLES DELEUZE: A STUDY OF THE TEMPORALITY IN CAPITALISM

By

Boram Jeong

August 2017

Dissertation supervised by Dr. Fred Evans and Dr. Éric Alliez

This dissertation looks at time as a socially or psychologically imposed ‘structure’ that determines the ways in which past, present and future are weaved together in the subject. This inquiry presents (1) a critical role of temporality in the formation of the subject, (2) a specific temporality characteristic of contemporary financial capitalism, and (3) the pathologies of time found in the subjects of capitalism. The first two chapters provide an extensive analysis of Deleuze’s passive syntheses of time given in *Difference and Repetition*, which reveals the subject’s passive relation to time as a structure of ‘becoming.’ The following chapters examine how this ontological structure of time interacts with socio-economic temporalities in its production of the subject. I particularly focus on the temporal structure of debt, which has become a general condition of the subjects in the current economic system. I claim that the debt-based economy produces ‘melancholic subjectivity,’ characterized by a dominance of the past and the inhibition of becoming.

## DEDICATION

To my parents, to whom I am infinitely indebted.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to first express my most sincere gratitude and appreciation to my director, Fred Evans, for his incredible support, encouragement and friendship. I must also thank my co-director, Éric Alliez, for his insightful feedback, guidance and extraordinary generosity. I am deeply grateful for the extremely helpful contributions and intellectual inspiration provided by the two other members of the committee at Duquesne, Jay Lampert and Daniel Selcer. I would also like to acknowledge the thoughtful input offered by my external readers, Leonard Lawlor, Tamsin Lorraine and Guillaume Sibertin-Blanc.

In addition, many thanks go out to the Philosophy Department at Duquesne University and École doctorale Pratique et théories du sens at Université Paris 8 for their administrative support, which allowed me the privilege of earning a dual degree. For their financial support including the dissertation fellowship, I am grateful to the McAnulty College and Graduate School of Liberal Arts. I would also like to thank Ronald Polansky, Joan Thompson and Kelly Arenson, whose guidance and generosity were invaluable in making my job search successful. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to David H. Kim for his exceptional support, intellectual guidance and faith in me. Thanks also to Constantin V. Boundas for encouraging me to publish an earlier version of the chapter on time and capitalism in *Deleuze Studies*.

Finally, I would like to thank my dear friends and family, whose love sustained me and kept me sane throughout my graduate studies. I will never forget the groceries, the care packages and good laughs brought to me by them in hard times. Special thanks to J for walking alongside me on this journey.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

- AO Deleuze, Gilles & Félix Guattari. *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. trans. Robert Hurley, Mark Seem and Helen R. Lane (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983. Citations to this work will be accompanied by pagination to Deleuze, Gilles & Félix Guattari. *Capitalisme et schizophrénie tome 1: L'Anti-Œdipe*, Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1972.
- B Deleuze, Gilles. *Bergsonism*. trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam. New York: Zone Books, 2006. Citations to this work will be accompanied by pagination to Deleuze, Gilles. *Le Bergsonisme*. Paris: PUF, 1966.
- C1 Deleuze, Gilles. *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image*. trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam. London: The Athlone Press, 1983. Citations to this work will be accompanied by pagination to Deleuze, Gilles. *Cinéma 1, L'image-mouvement*. Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1983.
- C2 Deleuze, Gilles. *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*. trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta. London: The Athlone Press, 1989. Citations to this work will be accompanied by pagination to Deleuze, Gilles. *Cinéma 2, L'Image-temps*. Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1985.
- DR Deleuze, Gilles. *Difference and Repetition*. trans. Paul Patton. New York: Columbia University Press, 1994. Citations to this work will be accompanied by pagination to Deleuze, Gilles. *Différence et Répétition*. Paris: PUF, 1968.
- F Deleuze, Gilles. *Foucault*. trans. Sean Hand, Minneapolis and London: Continuum, 1988. Citations to this work will be accompanied by pagination to Deleuze, Gilles. *Foucault*. Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1986.
- NP Deleuze, Gilles. *Nietzsche and Philosophy*. trans. Hugh Tomlinson. New York: Continuum, 1986. Citations to this work will be accompanied by pagination to Deleuze, Gilles. *Nietzsche et la philosophie*. Paris: PUF, 1962.
- PCK Deleuze, Gilles. *Kant's Critical Philosophy*. trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam. London: The Athlone Press, 1984. Citations to this work will be accompanied by pagination to Deleuze, Gilles. *La Philosophie Critique de Kant*. Paris: PUF, 1963.
- MP Deleuze, Gilles and Félix Guattari. *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Translated by Brian Massumi. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987. Citations to this work will be accompanied by pagination to Deleuze, Gilles and Félix Guattari. *Capitalisme et schizophrénie tome 2: Mille plateaux*. Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1980.

## **Introduction: Time, Subject and Capital**

Over the past thirty years, the suicide rate in Korea increased from a rate of 6.8 to 28.4 per 100,000. In the attempt to lower the rate, the government recently installed suicide-watch cameras on the popular suicide bridges, along with encouraging messages such as “the most shining moment of your life has yet to come.”<sup>1</sup> Despite the variety of the causes, it is hardly coincidental that this country also holds the highest ratio of household debt to income as well as the most credit cards per capita in the world. Suicide is often committed out of realization of the complete loss of ownership of the time to come, that is, when one feels that it is the only decision actively to make for (and against) oneself. We can say that suicide, as the most radical attempt to resign from one’s life to come, is caused by a failure to live in accord with temporality. For those who are in debt that multiplies infinitely over time, time promises only to accelerate debt growth. Suicides caused by the pressure of growing debt links the subject’s perception of time and the economic system, capitalism. In fact, we need not look as far as to the cases of suicide to prove the relationship. The majority of economic subjects in contemporary capitalism live with debt from credit cards and taking out loans and mortgages, which impact greatly on the perception of time. Although debt has existed in other types of economic systems, it appears that it has now become ‘a way of life’ generally in contemporary financial capitalism. Therefore, it is of great significance to investigate this new, capitalist form of temporality.

My research aims to show that there is a certain temporality characteristic of contemporary capitalism and that it is through participating in this temporality that a

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<sup>1</sup> <http://blogs.wsj.com/korearealtime/2013/11/08/seoul-bridge-of-life-still-attracts-suicide-attempts/>

capitalist subject is produced. To carry out this inquiry, I examine traditional reflections on the relationship between time and the subject, where time is considered to be a category through which the subject actively shapes her experience. Then I turn to the reversal of this relationship in the contemporary discourse, according to which time takes a crucial role in the constitution of the subject, namely, “subjectification.” Based on the significance of time in the subjectification process, I finally show how temporal dimensions – present, past and future – relate to the production of the capitalist subject. Here I focus specifically on the failure of recognizing futurity in one’s subjectivity in the subjectification process through debt. Therefore, the following questions will be posed throughout this dissertation: (1) What is the role of temporality in the formation of the subject? (2) What is distinctive about contemporary financial capitalism? How could the temporality of capitalism be characterized accordingly? (3) What are the possible symptoms or pathologies of time found in the subjects of capitalism?

The notion of temporality in philosophy has always been in a paradoxical relationship with subjectivity. On the one hand, time is dependent upon the subject, in the sense that it is a condition through which the subject experiences the world; it is a metaphysical category that determines our experience. On the other hand, the subject is *subjected* to time in the determination of the self. That is to say, the subject herself is *in* time. I will argue that the traditional view of time concerns mostly the former aspect. This way of understanding time was often related to physical time, that is, time as “the number of motion.”<sup>2</sup> However, with the emergence of psychoanalysis and the intellectual developments in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, later known as post-structuralism, the latter aspect of

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<sup>2</sup> Aristotle, *Physics* iv, 219a30-b2, in *The Complete Works of Aristotle: Revised Oxford Edition*, Vol.1, Edited by Jonathan Barnes, Translated by R.P. Hardie and R. K. Gaye (Princeton: Princeton University, 1995)

temporality became more prominent. This is due to the fact that the idea of the subject built upon identity was called into question; a subject is no longer conceived as a unity of consciousness or a substance that underlies change. Rather, it is *produced* over time, as an effect of unconscious, involuntary and inconsistent elements. Here, time is what constantly threatens the identity that a subject attributes to herself. This introduced complex relationships into temporal dimensions: the past and the present in the subject formation are understood neither as a linear structure nor as a simple causality. Present perception is shadowed by memory.

Among the important responses to this “crisis” of the modern subject, Gilles Deleuze’s theory of “passive synthesis” is of particular interest. As a reworking of Kant’s three syntheses (apprehension, reproduction, and recognition), which suggests the active synthesis of time that an already constructed subject experiences on the level of consciousness, Deleuze’s passive synthesis offers a genetic account of the subject formation. Time in this sense is not simply a metaphysical category or form of our experience, but a productive force of “subjectification.” Finally, I attempt to show the peculiarity of the temporal structure in the formation of the capitalist subject. Building upon the observations on contemporary capitalism in Deleuze’s later works, I shall try to demonstrate how this macro-level social structure influences the micro-level process of subjectification. We will first look at Deleuze’s reading of Marx’s theory of money, with a particular focus on his discussion of financial capital and credit-debt. Then I show how time subordinated to monetary movement functions as a structure under which the subject is produced by analyzing the temporality of ‘indebtedness.’ I will claim the temporal structure of debt

produces a ‘melancholic subjectivity,’ characterized as a dominance of the past and a preempted future.

This dissertation will contribute to Deleuze studies because it will propose a novel interpretation of Deleuze’s account of time in relation to the process of subjectification. Deleuze’s three syntheses of time, corresponding to three dimensions of time (present, past and future), have widely been thought of simply as a theory of time. I will show that it is not only an account of time but also a new theory of the subject based on the notion of the “fractured I.” Moreover, my work draws a link between seemingly disparate works of Deleuze. Deleuze scholarship currently divides into the studies on the early works and those on his later works written in collaboration with Félix Guattari. Hence it fails to address the continuity of his thought. In this project, I shall show by highlighting the significance of temporality in the production of the capitalist subject that Deleuze’s theory of time appearing in his early works connects closely to his later project on ‘capitalism and schizophrenia.’ I will also explore contemporary implications of his thought by showing that the psychological disturbances commonly found in the advanced capitalism need to be understood in this temporal structure.

## **I. Time and Movement: Deleuze's Critique of 'Time Subordinated to Movement'**

In this chapter, I will demonstrate how Deleuze's theory of time is developed through his understanding of the relationship between time and movement in the history of philosophy. The first two sections elucidate that Deleuze's view of time and movement is rooted in Henri Bergson's. The first part of the chapter will explain what Deleuze finds problematic in the traditional notions of time. Since Deleuze's emphasis on the significance of time in itself comes from his reading of Bergson, we will first see Bergson's attempt to restore the nature of time, which has only been 'symbolically represented in space'<sup>3</sup> by the predecessors in philosophy. In doing so, I present Deleuze's reading of Bergson's notion of time as a qualitative multiplicity. Deleuze pursues Bergson's problem of defining time positively without being projected on space, namely as a qualitative multiplicity rather than a means of counting the number of movements. The last two sections will be dedicated to investigate Deleuze's own view of time. I will argue that Deleuze's critique of time subordinated to movement is a critique of the idea of 'repetition' that underlies the ancient and modern notions of time. I show that Deleuze redefines time in terms of *difference*, more precisely as 'self-differentiation,' by synthesizing Bergson's concept of duration and Kant's definition of time as a form of 'auto-affection.' The newly defined time freed from movement prepares us for the problems that we will examine in the following chapters: a different understanding of the relationship between time and the subject (Chapter II) and the notion of time in capitalism and its relation with the movement of capital (Chapter III).

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<sup>3</sup> "[P]ure duration is wholly qualitative. It cannot be measured unless symbolically represented in space" (Bergson, *Time and Free Will: An Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness*. trans. F. L. Pogson (New York: Harper, 1960), 105).



## 1. Zeno's Paradox: Confusion of time with space

"I know of one Greek labyrinth which is a single straight line. Along that line so many philosophers have lost themselves that a mere detective might well do so, too. Scharlach, when in some other incarnation you hunt me, pretend to commit (or do commit) a crime at A, then a second crime at B, eight kilometers from A, then a third crime at C, four kilometers from A and B, half-way between the two. Wait for me afterwards at D, two kilometers from A and C, again halfway between both. Kill me at D as you now are going to kill me at Triste-le-Roy."<sup>4</sup>

Time becomes a pure straight line. It reminds me of Borges, the true labyrinth is the straight line. When time becomes a straight line, what does that mean and what change does that imply?<sup>5</sup>

In his short story called "Death and the compass," Borges speaks about labyrinth through the main character. What he refers to as the labyrinth that is a straight line is evidently the paradoxes of Zeno, given the following story of the points A, B, C, D. Deleuze takes up this language of "a single straight line" from Borges and use it to suggest a novel way of conceiving time. In fact, Zeno's paradox is a good place to start to look into the relationship of time and movement, which Deleuze consistently problematizes. But in which sense is a straight line the true labyrinth? What was time like before it was thought of as a straight line? What does it mean for time to become a straight line? In what follows, we will examine some of the presuppositions in Zeno's paradox regarding the relationship between time and movement and how they resonate with Deleuze' critique of the traditional notion of time. Then I will try to demonstrate the new form of time Deleuze suggests by introducing the "pure straight line."

Let us first take a close look at the paradoxes of Zeno. Zeno discusses the four famous paradoxes of motion and a paradox of plurality. We will be focusing on two of the former.

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<sup>4</sup> Jorge Luis Borges, 'Death and the compass,' in *Labyrinths: Selected Stories and Other Writings* (New Directions, 2007), 86.

<sup>5</sup> "Lecture on Kant (*Cours Vincennes: synthèse et temps*) - March, 21, 1978," *Les Cours de Gilles Deleuze*, <http://www.webdeleuze.com/php/texte.php?cle=58&groupe=Kant&langue=1>

The first paradox, ‘the dichotomy’ concerns the problem of the sum of infinite series.

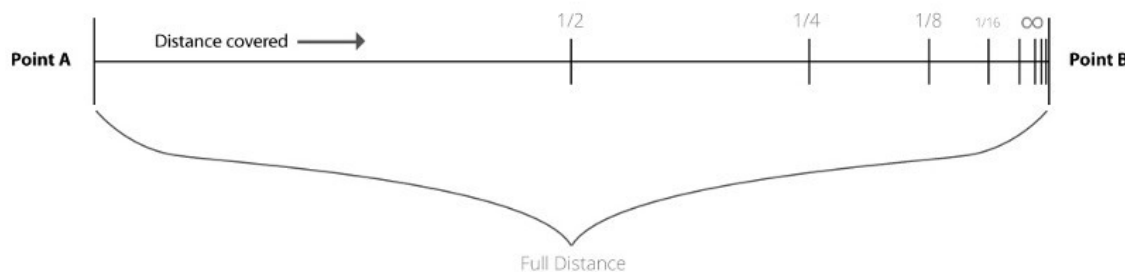


Figure 1. Zeno's first paradox of motion

According to Zeno, when an object is moving from point A to point B, it has to arrive at the half point between A and B (A') before traversing the whole distance between them. Then again, it must arrive at the quarter point (A'') before it reaches the half point between A and B (A') and *ad infinitum*.<sup>6</sup> Thus Zeno argues that the object can never reach the point B. The second paradox ‘Achilles’ involves a race between Achilles and the tortoise.<sup>7</sup> The tortoise has a head start. Zeno argues that Achilles is never able to overtake the tortoise. This is so because by the time he catches up the distance between the tortoise and him, the tortoise will have advanced further. When Achilles reaches this new point, the tortoise again will have moved ahead. Even if the distance between them can become shorter, it cannot be reduced to nothing. This is a paradox since we cannot explain how Achilles can reach the tortoise, although we know *empirically* that an object does move from A to B and that Achilles can catch up the tortoise.

In the first paradox, the problem concerns the relationship between parts and wholes.

<sup>6</sup> Aristotle, *Physics* VI: 9, 239b9-14 in *The Complete Works of Aristotle: Revised Oxford Edition*, Vol.1, Edited by Jonathan Barnes, Translated by R.P. Hardie and R. K. Gaye (Princeton: Princeton University, 1995)

<sup>7</sup> Simplicius 1013.35-1015.2: “The [second] argument was called ‘Achilles,’ accordingly, from the fact that Achilles was taken [as a character] in it, and the argument says that it is impossible for him to overtake the tortoise when pursuing it. For in fact it is necessary that what is to overtake [something], before overtaking [it], first reach the limit from which what is fleeing set forth. In [the time in] which what is pursuing arrives at this, what is fleeing will advance a certain interval, even if it is less than that which what is pursuing advanced” (Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Physics* 6, trans. D. Konstan (London: Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd, 1989)).

The distance between A and B may be divided into infinite parts and these infinite parts cannot sum to a finite whole. In the second, the issue is the relationship between space and time, both of which Zeno believed to be infinitely divisible. That is, by the temporal instant in which Achilles reaches the aimed position of tortoise in space, the tortoise will have already moved. It concerns the problem of coordinating two series in an infinitely divisible space and an infinitely divisible time.

Among the thinkers who have attempted to resolve the paradoxes, the one that interests us particularly is Henri Bergson, since he examines the underlying assumptions in the paradoxes regarding the nature of motion and space.<sup>8</sup> The point of his argument is that the paradoxes arise due to the confusion between motion in time and space. That is to say, motion that occurs in time is different from homogeneous space in its nature, thus it cannot be reconstructed with traversed space. Bergson claims that “[t]he mistake of the Eleatics arises from their identification of this series of acts, each of which is *of a definite kind and indivisible*, with the homogeneous space which underlies them.”<sup>9</sup> In the first demonstration of Zeno’s paradox above, we see the problem lies in the infinite divisibility of a quantity. Here the motion between the point A and the point B is understood in terms of parts of the interval between them. Since the interval is thought to be infinitely divisible it is logically impossible for it to be traversed. However, according to Bergson, the motion cannot be translated into an infinitely divisible *quantitative* multiplicity, i.e., the interval in space, since it occurs *in time*. What makes space divisible is its homogeneity and externality. Unlike the

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<sup>8</sup> For Bergson’s refutation of Zeno’s paradox, see Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, trans. A. Mitchell (New York: Holt, Reinhart and Winston, 1911); Alba Papa-Grimaldi, “Why mathematical solutions of zeno’s paradoxes miss the point: Zeno’s one and many relation and Parmenides’ prohibition,” *The Review of Metaphysics* 50 (December 1996): 299-314.

<sup>9</sup> Bergson, *Time and Free Will: An Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness*, trans. F. L. Pogson (New York: Harper, 1960), 113.

traversed space, motion in time as a *qualitative* multiplicity does not consist of homogenous units. The homogeneous space can be divided and put together again but each of Achilles's steps is a distinct, indivisible act. In the motion in time there are not any moments that are identical or external to one another. In short, the paradox occurs as a result of conceiving time as homogeneous medium. That motion as temporal duration is immediately given as wholes resolves the first paradox, and that it cannot be coordinated with an infinitely divisible space resolves the second paradox.

Further, Bergson makes a more general claim that this way of understanding movement as that which is reduced to space, has been dominant throughout the history of metaphysics.<sup>10</sup> In the lecture 'Perception of Change,' he claims:

Metaphysics, as a matter of fact, was born of the arguments of Zeno of Elea on the subject of change and movement. It was Zeno who, by drawing attention to the absurdity of what he called movement and change, led the philosophers – Plato first and foremost – to seek the true and coherent reality in what does not change.<sup>11</sup>

Bergson believes that Zeno, by reducing motion to the traversed space, fails to understand the nature of time and movement. According to him, time in metaphysics is often conceived of as a homogenous medium analogous to space, with its qualitative and durational nature eliminated. He calls this a 'spatialization' of time. It is because time was spatialized that the metaphysical inquiries tend toward 'the unchangeable' behind change or movement.

Whether Bergson's critique is a fair critique of metaphysics is not without controversy, but my primary concern here is to look into what Bergson suggests as the nature of time that is irreducible to space.

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<sup>10</sup> This is, of course, not to say that our experience of time is separable from that of space. Our experience of time mostly involves action, which is played out in space. Bergson's point is, rather, that motion in time cannot be reconstructed from the distance traversed. We will look more closely at how the 'spatialization' occurs in the following section.

<sup>11</sup> Henri Bergson, "Perception of Change," in *The Creative Mind: An Introduction to Metaphysics*, trans. Mabelle L. Andison (Mineola: Dover Publications, 2007), 107-132, 117.

## 2. Bergson's view of movement and time

### 2.1 Bergson's theory of multiplicities

Bergson's characterization of spatialized time is crucial to understanding Deleuze's notion of time that we will see in the next section. Bergson shows that there is an essential aspect of time that cannot be captured by the idea of spatialized time, which he will call *duration*.<sup>12</sup> His account of duration demonstrates the difference in nature between space and time. As seen above, the divisibility of the traversed distance comes from homogeneity and externality of space. In contrast to these spatial qualities, Bergson attributes heterogeneity and internality to time as duration. He then distinguishes two types of multiplicity, which correspond to the material objects in space and the states of consciousness in time. With this distinction Bergson explains why we tend to miss the durational nature of time by conceiving time as homogeneous medium in our ordinary experience.

In *L'Essai sur les Données Immédiates de la Conscience* [English title: *Time and Free Will: An Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness*], a response to Kant's view on time and free will, Bergson shows how the problem of free will can be resolved by understanding time differently. Bergson argues that Kant separated the phenomenal world from the thing-in-itself, defining the former as the world determined by causality. Therefore, Kant had to place free will outside the phenomenal self. Bergson emphasizes the qualitative nature of time, which he claims Kant dismissed, by drawing the difference between discrete

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<sup>12</sup> Bergson conceives 'lived time' as duration (*durée réelle*), as opposed to scientific time. He defines pure duration as "the form which the succession of our conscious states assumes when our ego lets itself live, when it refrains from separating its present state from its former states" (*Time and Free Will*, 100). I call it an 'aspect' of time in the sense that we experience time in different modalities; there is time internally experienced in consciousness, and time onto which our understanding of spatial world is mapped. See the example of 'walking across the room' in Jay Lampert, *Simultaneity and Delay: a Dialectical Theory of Staggered Time* (New York: Continuum, 2012), 125.

multiplicity and continuous multiplicity.<sup>13</sup> As seen in the subtitle of the book, his theory of multiplicities aims to distinguish two very different sorts of ‘the given (manifold)’ in the consciousness. He suggests that we understand the material objects as discrete/quantitative multiplicities, as opposed to continuous/qualitative multiplicities to which he relates the states of consciousness. Bergson begins with the former, specifically with the discussion of numbers. According to him, numbers are one *and* many (or, unity *and* multiplicity) in that each of them is both a unit and a collection of units. With the example of a flock of sheep, Bergson shows that numerical/ quantitative multiplicity is spatial and homogeneous; he asks whether we count them by repeating the images of a single sheep in time or by putting all the images together in one ideal space. He claims that when counting, we see each of them as a unit by dismissing individual differences, in which case what differentiate them are the positions they occupy in space. According to Bergson, “[w]e involuntarily fix at a point in space each of the moments which we count, and it is only on this condition that the abstract units come to form a sum.”<sup>14</sup> Thus even when we believe we count the moments in time, we in fact count the positions in space. What characterizes the quantitative/ discrete multiplicity is homogeneity and externality.

In contrast, there are no moments in the states of consciousness that are external to one another. Bergson notes that the different states of consciousness permeate one another even when they seem to be in succession. I can describe a series of successive events in a linear fashion; I went to bed last night, and woke up to a nightmare, then drank coffee. The different states of consciousness that make up of this series of events are not discrete

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<sup>13</sup> Deleuze later calls this as numerical and quantitative multiplicity as opposed to qualitative multiplicity in his lecture “Théorie des multiplicités chez Bergson,” in *Deleuze Epars*, eds. Gilles Deleuze, André Bernold & Richard Pinhas (Paris: Hermann, 2005).

<sup>14</sup> Bergson, *Time and Free Will*. 79.

moments. It is hard to say when exactly I fell asleep, or began to realize that I was dreaming by separating one moment from another. About our life events as well, it is hard to say when I became dependent on caffeine, or when I began to understand the meaning of my childhood incidents. Also, some dream images permeate my waking life, and some memories from my childhood permeate the present moment. The states of consciousness, instead of being external to one another, form a whole that can only be thought in terms of qualitative difference.

We can also see that change is indivisible when we think of listening to a melody. If it stops sooner than it is supposed to, it is not the same whole.<sup>15</sup> This is not simply a matter of the part that is missing. We hear melody, not by putting different notes together but as a continuous flow that forms a whole while the previous notes are continually interacting with the present note. Since time is not a homogeneous medium in this sense, duration in time cannot be divided without going through a qualitative change. Thus Bergson calls this type of multiplicity a *continuous* multiplicity. The reason why the states of consciousness seem to be external to one another to us is because we fix each of them to the positions of the images in space. Another example Bergson gives to demonstrate this point is the movement of pendulum; when we observe the movement, we tend to understand the flow of different conscious states in terms of the corresponding positions of the pendulum. In doing so, we form a habit of distinguishing the successive moments of our consciousness as if they are external parts to one another. Bergson writes that “the conception of an empty homogeneous medium is [...] a kind of reaction against that heterogeneity which is the very

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<sup>15</sup> Bergson, “Perception of Change,” 122-123.

ground of our experience.”<sup>16</sup> According to Bergson, this habit formation serves a practical purpose. We break up duration or change into discontinuous states since it enables us to act upon things.<sup>17</sup> For the same reason, we assume underneath the change an invariable object that moves.<sup>18</sup> This is how we reduce duration in time to the movement in position.

## 2.2 Bergson’s analysis of movement

In his later works, Bergson elaborates more on the durational nature of time. In *Creative Evolution*, he shows how the confusion of movement with traversed space has led to spatializing time in the history of philosophy. Deleuze will develop this later as a critique of ‘time subordinated to movement,’ and claim that time needs to be distinguished from what happens in it. Deleuze, in the first chapter of *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image* as well as his lectures on cinema, summarizes Bergson’s theses on movement as what follows:

1. We cannot reconstitute movement with positions in space or instants in time.
2. There are two different ways of reconstituting movement with instants. In antiquity, it was privileged instants (*des instants privilégiés*), but after the modern scientific revolution, it became any-moment-whatevers (*l’instant quelconque*).
3. The instant is an immobile section of movement and movement is a mobile section of duration, the whole.

The first thesis concerns the confusion between movement and the space covered. As we have seen above, Bergson’s argument relies on the divisibility of the space as opposed to the indivisibility of movement in time. Deleuze points out that this implies another claim that “you cannot reconstitute movement with positions in space or instants in time: that is, with immobile sections (*«coupes» immobiles*)” (C1, 1/9). This sort of attempt fails for the following

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<sup>16</sup> Bergson, *Time and Free Will*, 97.

<sup>17</sup> We will return to the question habit and its relation to our practical need for action in the next chapter, where we discuss the relationship between perception and memory.

<sup>18</sup> Bergson, “Perception of Change,” 122.



reasons: first, we can put as many positions together as possible, but movement cannot be captured since it always happens in the interval. Second, we can divide time infinitely, but however close the two instants can be we cannot capture movement since it occurs in duration. Bergson calls this “the cinematographic illusion,” in the sense that cinema presents a false movement by making the instantaneous sections pass consecutively.

The second thesis regarding the difference between this ‘illusion’ in the ancient and the modern is worth a close examination since it shows Bergson’s critique of the traditional understanding of movement and time. He thinks that in antiquity, movement was understood in terms of some privileged moments or privileged positions; it was conceived as a transition from one form to another. This may appear to be an almost too general, even unfair description of the ancient thinkers, especially considering the wide spectrum of positions regarding change and movement from the Presocratics to the Stoics. What Bergson actually has in mind seems to be Aristotle’s view of time and movement. Since Forms or Ideas themselves are not in movement or change,<sup>19</sup> we always miss something about movement if we construct time and movement with a sequence of positions or forms. For instance, we could describe the movement of a running horse as a shift between two forms – a form of the horse in its maximum muscular contraction and its maximum expansion. But this is in fact explaining movement from the two positions or forms that are derived from the continuous movement *retrospectively*, as a ‘frozen’ moment.<sup>20</sup> These instants extracted from movement are themselves motionless.

In his lecture on Bergson and cinema, Deleuze explains this through Aristotle’s

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<sup>19</sup> Forms in Plato or Aristotle’s God as an unmoved mover are motionless and only have movements of pure thinking. If change is a matter moving from one form to another, what moves would be the matter that is actualized by going through the change in forms.

<sup>20</sup> This is why Bergson describes a cinematic representation of movement as an illusion. Movement reproduced by cinema is merely an effect of movement. However, Deleuze disagrees with Bergson on this point.

account of ‘natural’ place. In Aristotle’s distinction between natural and forced movement, there seem to be privileged positions in natural movement, where a thing returns to its ‘own proper place’ from the place it occupied. For example, when there is no hindrance, fire goes up rather than down and body moves down rather than up.<sup>21</sup> When they move to a certain direction that is determined by nature, they are said to regain their natural place.

Commenting on Bergson’s presentation of the movement in antiquity, Deleuze calls this time of natural movement an accented time (*le temps fort*) as opposed to the unaccented time (*le temps faible*), in the sense that it determines the direction of the movement.

If movement in antiquity can be summarized as “a reconstruction of the movement with privileged instants that refer to forms *outside of* the movement,”<sup>22</sup> movement in modernity was understood in reference to the instants *immanent to* movement itself. Bergson emphasized that the shift was made by the scientific revolution.

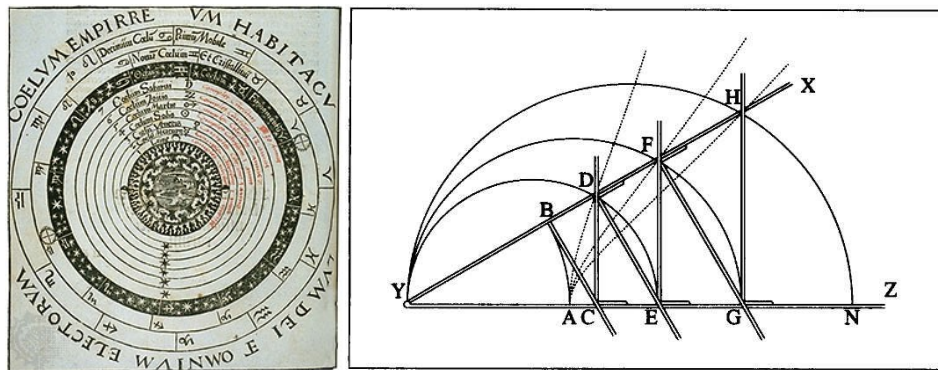


Figure 2. Aristotle’s Model of Universe<sup>23</sup>/ Figure 3. Descartes’s Proportional Compass

<sup>21</sup> “Further, the locomotions of the elementary natural bodies – namely, fire, earth, and the like – show not only that place is something, but also that it exerts a certain influence. Each is carried to its own place – up and down and the rest of the six directions [...] It is not every chance direction which is up, but where fire and what is light are carried; similarly, too, down is not any chance direction but where what has weight and what is made of earth are carried. [...]” (Aristotle, *Physics*, Book IV, 208b 9-23).

<sup>22</sup> “Dans un cas vous prétendez reconstituer le mouvement à partir d’instant privilégiés qui renvoient à des formes *hors du* mouvement [...]” (emphasis added ; Deleuze, “Lecture on Cinema November 10, 1981,” from *La Voix de Gilles Deleuze en ligne*, [http://www2.univ-paris8.fr/deleuze/article.php3?id\\_article=17](http://www2.univ-paris8.fr/deleuze/article.php3?id_article=17)); see also C1, 4/12. “For antiquity, movement refers to intelligible elements, Forms or Ideas which are themselves eternal and mobile.”

<sup>23</sup> Engraving from Peter Apian’s *Cosmographie* (1524) Newberry Library, Chicago, Retrieved from <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Aristotle/Physics-and-metaphysics>

As we have seen above, change is explained by the motion of a thing towards its proper place or proper form in Aristotle. So a geometrical figure is defined by its form for the Greek mathematicians. For example, there is no homogeneous space for Aristotle. For in the celestial region made of ether, natural movement is circular, whereas in the sublunary region made of earth, natural movement is linear whether it is upward or downward (Figure 2). But Cartesian geometry explains curves in a very different way; curves are defined by the positions of a point on the movable straight line. As expressed in the equation, the curve is determinable at “any moment whatever in the course.”<sup>24</sup> The curve is not considered in terms of the form or the moment – privileged – where it is finalized, but in terms of actual positions of the moving points. This is, Bergson argues, what differentiates modern science from ancient science.

With regard to this point, Deleuze gives an example that represents the idea of time in modernity the best – chronophotography. A French physiologist Marey invented a camera that records a moving object in consecutive moments. This modern technology reproduces movement as a succession of different instants or phases of movement. Deleuze emphasizes that modern science invented the equidistance of instants, which makes it possible to substitute privileged moments to ‘any moment whatever’ in thinking about movement and time.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Henri Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, trans. Arthur Mitchell (New York : The Modern Library, 1944), 335.

<sup>25</sup> “Lecture on Cinema (*Cinema: Image-Mouvement*) November 10, 1981,” from *La Voix de Gilles Deleuze en ligne*, [http://www2.univ-paris8.fr/deleuze/article.php3?id\\_article=17](http://www2.univ-paris8.fr/deleuze/article.php3?id_article=17).

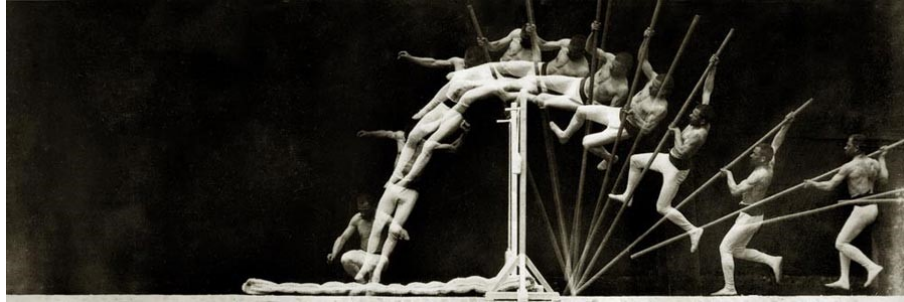


Figure 4. E. J. Marey, *Saut à la perche* (1890)

In his terms, modern science has liberated movement from privileged moments or forms in its break from ancient thought. Deleuze highlights that in this second type of thinking, movement is explained by the internal elements rather than the forms that are external to movement. As there is no longer privileged instant in the movement in modern science, they attempted to reconstruct movement by *analyzing* it.

The third thesis is the most complicated and the most fundamental one, according to Deleuze. This concerns a peculiar distinction Bergson makes between *real* movement as flux and the movement as perceived. As the instants or immobile sections are only an abstraction of the real movement, movement is only an expression of change on the deeper level. Deleuze calls movement in space a translation and the qualitative change as transformation.<sup>26</sup> He gives us the formula below in *Cinema 1: Movement-Image*.

$$\frac{\text{immobile sections}}{\text{movement}} = \frac{\text{movement as mobile section}}{\text{qualitative change}}$$

If movement in space takes place with regard to parts, transformation or qualitative change regards the whole. So Deleuze says that movements in space always refer to the qualitative

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<sup>26</sup> Here Deleuze is thinking of Descartes's definition of motion; Descartes argues against Aristotelian idea of locomotion, motion from one place to another, that motion is "the transference (translation) of one part of matter or of one body, from the vicinity of those bodies immediately contiguous to it and are considered as at rest, into the vicinity of [some] others." (*Principles of Philosophy*, II, 25, trans. Valentine R. Miller and Reese P. Miller (Dordrech: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1982), 51); I would like to acknowledge Dr. Daniel Selcer's helpful suggestions on this point.

or dynamic changes of the Whole.<sup>27</sup> Deleuze compares the migration of the birds with the movement of the billiard balls to demonstrate this. The latter as an abstract movement can be explained by an isolated system, where the balls are supposed to move one another amongst themselves. In contrast, the former as a concrete, real movement is supposed to express changes in the whole.<sup>28</sup> That is, the birds' movement in a certain direction and distance manifests the qualitative changes in the climate.

Deleuze notes the problem for Bergson was that both ancient and modern ways of articulating movement suppose that *the whole is given*. In antiquity, the whole was given as Forms or Ideas that are eternal. In modernity, it was given in the form of the principle with which we can explain the system at any given moment. According to Deleuze, Bergson's claim that the modern science still relies on the ancient ontology comes from the fact that it does not provide the conception of time that embraces the qualitative change (of the whole) behind the movement in space (between *partes extra partes*). We will see what it means to presuppose that the whole is given in the following section.

### **3. Deleuze's view on time and movement: Subordination of time to movement**

Deleuze develops his own account of time largely from Bergson's critique of homogenous and abstract time and his theses on movement. However, there is an important difference between Bergson's critique of the traditional notions of time and Deleuze's; Bergson supposed that the concept of time is inseparable from movement. Therefore, the problem of

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<sup>27</sup> "Les mouvements de translation expriment toujours par nature les changements du Tout. En d'autres termes, les mouvements dans l'espace, les mouvements de translation renvoient toujours à des changements qualitatifs ou évolutifs" (Deleuze, "Lecture on Cinema (*Cinema: Image-Mouvement*) - November 17, 1981," from *La Voix de Gilles Deleuze en ligne*, [http://www2.univ-paris8.fr/deleuze/article.php3?id\\_article=12](http://www2.univ-paris8.fr/deleuze/article.php3?id_article=12)).

<sup>28</sup> The same applies to the well-known example of sugar in water given by Bergson. The movement of translation: displacement of the sugar particles. The transformation of the whole: a qualitative change from water with sugar lumps to sugared water.

spatializing time comes from understanding movement in spatial terms. But in Deleuze, the problem lies in *subordinating time to movement* rather than confusing time with space. He is interested in showing how limited the notion of time can be when understood in its relation to movement. According to Deleuze, defining time in terms of movement amounts to limiting time to what happens in it.

Deleuze's account of the rapport between time and movement derives from Bergson's theses on movement. The idea of movement from which he tries to liberate time is what we have seen above in the third thesis: movement as a relation between parts. He will develop further the contrast between movement and time as qualitative change in the whole.

In this section we will look at Deleuze's remarks on his predecessors' attempt to define time in terms of movement. As we look through different kinds of movement that determined the image of time in Plato, Aristotle and Kant, we will examine (1) what Deleuze means by the subordination of time to movement and (2) how he describes time liberated from movement. The first part concerns the notion of time in antiquity, where time was conceived in terms of the periodic or circular movements of the heavenly bodies, and the linear/successive time in modernity. If this part mostly comes from his reading of Bergson, the second part shows his divergence from Bergson concerning Kant's idea of time. Deleuze draws out of Kant the notion of time that is independent of movement, which he calls 'time out of joint.'

### **3.1 Time in antiquity: Circular movement**

As long as time remains on its hinges, it is subordinate to movement: it is the measure of movement, interval or number. This was the view of ancient philosophy (PCK, vii).

Deleuze's discussion on the problem of time defined in terms of movement first

appears in *Différance and Repetition*.<sup>29</sup> He writes that the dominant idea of time has been “a matter of physical time, of a periodic or circular time which is that of the *Physis* and is subordinate to events which occur within it, to movements which it measures or to events which punctuate it.” (DR 88/118-119) He then claims that time of the *Physis* was marked by the cycle of movement; it is “the subordination of time to those properly cardinal points through which pass the periodic movements which it measures (time, number of the movement, for the soul as much as for the world)” (DR 88/119-120).

In his lecture on Kant given in 1978, Deleuze further elaborates this idea. He gives an example of the notion of time in antiquity, specifically Plato’s characterization of time as ‘a moving image of eternity’ in *Timaeus*. In Plato, time is considered to be circular, since it is inseparable from the cyclical movement of the planets. Here is the passage where Plato explains how time was generated from eternity, as an imitation of it:

So, as the model was itself an everlasting Living Thing, he set himself to bringing this universe to completion in such a way that it, too, would have that character to the extent that was possible. Now it was the Living Thing’s nature to be eternal, but it isn’t possible to bestow eternity fully upon anything that is begotten. And so he began to think of making a moving image of eternity: at the same time as he brought order to the universe, he would make an eternal image, moving according to number, of eternity remaining in unity. This number, of course, is what we now call ‘time.’<sup>30</sup> The universe is generated from the eternal living creature, but since the generated cannot

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<sup>29</sup> Deleuze discusses the problem in various works, such as *Différance et Répétition* (1968), *Lectures on Kant* (1978), Preface for the 1984 English Edition of *La philosophie critique de Kant* (1963), and *Cinema 2: L’Image-Temps* (1985). After introducing it in *Différance et Répétition*, Deleuze tries to show in his lecture on Kant in 1978, what it means to understand time as a form, in contrast to the idea of time in antiquity that is inseparable from the movement of the celestial bodies. In the preface of *La philosophie critique de Kant* published in 1984, he restates that time in antiquity is “subordinate to movement: it is the measure of movement, interval or number” (PCK, vii). Here he gives a critique of time understood as succession while claiming that we need to separate time from the things that are in time. “Time is no longer defined by succession because succession concerns only things and movements which are in time” (ibid.). Also, in the preface to the English edition of *Cinema 2: L’Image-Temps* published in 1985, Deleuze highlights the importance of the reversal of the relationship between time and movement by calling it a revolution taken place in philosophy from the Greeks to Kant (xi). Given that Deleuze consistently raises this question of defining time in terms of movement throughout his works, we may say that it is one of the central themes in his thought.

<sup>30</sup> Plato, “*Timaeus*,” trans. by Donald J. Zeyl, in *Plato: Complete Works*, edit. John M. Cooper (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1997), 37d.

fully have the nature of the generator, it cannot be eternal.<sup>31</sup> In this respect, time seems to be the order of the finite universe. The eternity is not subject to motion but unity, so time is created as an image of eternity that moves according to number. It seems that this time as the image of eternity is a deprivation of eternity. In defining time, people in antiquity believed that the circular movement of the planets is perpetual so that it can be a reference for all the other finite movements. Only the circular movements can be perpetual since it is the sole kind of movement where things move towards the original position. Plato later in the work introduces the term ‘the perfect year,’ which is brought by the perfect number of time: the time when all of the revolving planets of various circuits simultaneously return to their original position.<sup>32</sup>

The first point Deleuze makes about Plato’s view of time is that the form of time is derived from the form of movement, which is a circle, in this case. Since the perfect number of time is determined by the positions of the celestial bodies, time is subject to the cycle of the movement toward the perfect year. Thus time itself takes a cyclical form that is measured by the revolution of the same.<sup>33</sup> According to Deleuze, “the circle of time, in so far as it measures planetary movement, and the return of the same, it’s precisely this time become circular.”<sup>34</sup> This raises a question of distinguishing time from the things that are in time, since Deleuze wants to explore the possibility of thinking time itself rather than with reference to the things that it measures.

Second, Deleuze talks about what it entails to think of time as a circle. What he finds

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<sup>31</sup> In Plato, eternity (aiôn) is a being that is not subject to time (*chronos*). Deleuze describe them as two conceptions of time in *Logique du sens*, following the Stoics. Chronos is the time of the present, understood as successive moments in relation to the past and the future, whereas aiôn is a time of the virtual.

<sup>32</sup> Daniel Smith calls this an “originary time,” in the sense that time is marked by a reference point, privileged positions in the cosmos (*Essays on Deleuze* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), 131).

<sup>33</sup> Plato, “Timaeus,” 39d.

<sup>34</sup> Deleuze, “Lecture on Kant (*Cours Vincennes: synthèse et temps*) - March, 21, 1978” from *Les Cours de Gilles Deleuze*, <http://www.webdeleuze.com/php/texte.php?cle=58&groupe=Kant&langue=1>



interesting in the circular time is that it functions as *limits* of the world. In Plato, movement and time are both resulted from the degradation from eternity. What constitutes time is the ‘wandering’ of the celestial bodies. However, there is an assumption that at the end of this wandering, their position before and after the cycle will correspond. Cyclical movement is a restoration of the place where things in the world are supposed to be. In other words, there are positions in space or moments in time that are privileged toward which movement is directed. According to Deleuze, this is what a Greek term ‘*thesis* (θέσις: position)’ stands for. It is thus supposed that what happens in the finite world must come to be in order after the cycle of time.<sup>35</sup> Interestingly, Deleuze observes that this circular image of time derived from the revolution of planets also relates to the way worldly events are unfolding. He thinks that there is “a certain sense of the tragic for the Greeks which is the tragic element of cyclical time.”<sup>36</sup> He notes that there are three moments in the cycle of this tragic time: a moment of limitation given as justice, an act of the transgression of this limitation, and the moment of restoration. In the last moment, the limit is restored and the order is reestablished. This is modeled on the cyclical form of time. I believe this is what makes the idea of cyclical time interesting to us. The notion of time structured by circular planetary movements may seem obsolete in today’s context, but the idea of ‘return’ remains relevant to us. As will be shown, for Deleuze understanding repetition in a non-circular image of time is crucial. We will come back to this literary reference later in the section 3.3 on time as a straight line.

### 3.2 Time as a succession of instants

Time is no longer defined by succession because succession concerns only things and movements which are in time. If time itself were succession, it would need to succeed

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<sup>35</sup> Lecture on Cinema (*Cinema: Image-Mouvement*) - November 10, 1981, from *La Voix de Gilles Deleuze en ligne*, [http://www2.univ-paris8.fr/deleuze/article.php?id\\_article=17](http://www2.univ-paris8.fr/deleuze/article.php?id_article=17).

<sup>36</sup> Lecture on Kant (*Cours Vincennes: synthèse et temps*) - March, 21, 1978 from *Les Cours de Gilles Deleuze*.

in another time, and on to infinity. Things succeed each other in various times, but they are also simultaneous in the same time, and they remain in an indefinite time (PCK, vii).

We saw in the last section that modern science liberated time from a sequence of privileged positions or moments and made it possible to reconstitute movement with any moment whatever. There is no longer a model of movement that all the other movements refer to. If time is no longer bound to the circular movement of celestial bodies, in which sense can time still be subordinated to movement? According to Bergson-Deleuze, what replaced circular or periodic time is the concept of time as a succession of instants, where time is considered in relation to the trajectory of objects in motion.

I think that Aristotle's account of time is important to examine this view; he did not identify time with successive moments, but he seems to have introduced the idea that time cannot be separated from the states of an object in motion. Also, it is quite obvious that Deleuze is referring to Aristotle's theory of time in *Physics*, when he talks about the 'time of the *Physis*' that is "subordinate to movement: it is the measure of movement, interval or number" (PCK vii, see also DR 88/119-120). Here is Aristotle's widely known passage, where he defines time as a measure of motion:

For time is just this—number of motion in respect of 'before' and 'after' (τοῦτο γὰρ ἐστὶν ὁ χρόνος, ἀριθμὸς κινήσεως κατὰ τὸ πρότερον καὶ ὕστερον).<sup>37</sup>

This definition of time can be divided into two parts: First, by defining time as "number of motion," Aristotle emphasizes that time is inseparable from motion and that time has something to do with counting or measuring the quantity of motion. He thinks that time cannot be understood independent of motion or change, since we can hardly know a lapse of time without noticing any motion or change. That is to say, we perceive time when and

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<sup>37</sup> Aristotle, *Physics*, Book IV, 219a30-b2 in *The Complete Works of Aristotle: Revised Oxford Edition*, Vol.1, edit. Jonathan Barnes, trans. R.P. Hardie and R.K. Gaye (Princeton: Princeton University, 1995).

only when we perceive motion or change. Motion or change cannot itself be equated with time, but *there can be no time without change*. We may say that for Aristotle motion is logically prior to time when he defines time in terms of motion.<sup>38</sup> Second, in marking the interval of time through the perception of movement or change, we recognize the temporal order, ‘before’ and ‘after.’ To mark the before and the after, we need to first recognize the distinct ‘now’ moments. For instance, one sees a lapse of time through the change in the state of the object A, specifically by comparing the state of A at a certain moment ( $T_1$ ) with its state in the previous moment ( $T_0$ ). What constitutes time here is the temporal relation between the moment of ‘present now’ and the moments of ‘previous now.’ Time, in this sense, seems to consist in the succession of different ‘now’s.

In the chapter called “Time and Temporality” of his book *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, Heidegger characterizes Aristotle’s notion of time as “a sequence of nows from the not-yet-now to the no-longer-now, a sequence of nows which is not arbitrary but whose intrinsic direction is from the future to the past.”<sup>39</sup> He also claims that our everyday understanding of time – a linear, quantitative, clock-time – is originated from Aristotle. In the discussion of ‘now’ in *Physics*, Aristotle makes it clear that it cannot itself be part of time, for it is infinitely small and not supposed to be extended, like mathematical points. Nonetheless, the ‘now’ moment as a unit of time plays an essential role in our perception of time. For Aristotle, the ‘now’ as the limit between before and after not only enables us to notice changes, but also makes these two different moments successive. It is also worth noting that neither past nor future can constitute time in Aristotle: the past has happened

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<sup>38</sup> See Tony Roark, ‘Chapter 3. Time is not motion,’ *Aristotle on Time: A Study of the Physics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

<sup>39</sup> Martin Heidegger, *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), 260.

and is not, whereas the future will be but does not yet exist.<sup>40</sup>

What Deleuze may find problematic about Aristotle's definition of time in *Physics* is the following: First, in the Bergson-Deleuzian language, there is a priority of space – or place, rather – over time in Aristotle's description of time. When we say time is a number of motion, marked by the states of moving things before and after the motion, the distinction between before and after holds *in place*.<sup>41</sup> In other words, what differentiates anteriority and posterity in time is perceived through the change in the instantaneous states of objects in space. If this is the case, this conception of time would be derived from our perception of space. As seen above, time loses its qualitative and durational character when it is defined in terms of the succession of different positions in space. Second, what interests Deleuze more than the spatialization of time is the distinction between time itself and things that are in time. Aristotle understands time, at least in *Physics*, as a measure of things that are in time, which makes it inseparable from number and counting. Although Aristotle acknowledges that time cannot be identified with number itself, it is conceived as a quantity of motion or the counted number of motion.<sup>42</sup> In this sense time in Aristotle deals more with things in time than time itself, according to Deleuze. He highlights that time has to be more than what happens in it. Deleuze writes, “[t]ime is no longer defined by succession because succession concerns only things and movements which are in time” (PCK, vii).

However, Aristotle's idea of time does not lead to the same problem as Plato's view of

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<sup>40</sup> “One part of it has been and is not, while the other is going to be and is not yet. Yet time – both infinite time and any time you like to take – is made up of these. One would naturally suppose that what is made up of things which do not exist could have no share in reality.” (218a); for a detailed discussion of ‘the now’ moment in Aristotle and Heidegger, see Jacques Derrida, “Ousia and Gramme: Note on a Note from *Being and Time*,” in *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 29-67.

<sup>41</sup> For Aristotle, change in place (local motion) is preceded by all other motion – changes in quantity or quality. He understands that the continuity of time is derived from the continuity of local motion as a primary type of motion, which depends on the continuity of bodily extension.

<sup>42</sup> According to Aristotle, time is “not number with which we count, but the number of things which are counted” (*Physics*, 220b).

time, which suggests a certain type of movement that all other movement is destined to repeat. Then in which sense does the concept of time as a measure of movement still remain limited? In his lecture on cinema, Deleuze shows how it can lead to a mechanistic model of time. He refers to Bergson's remarks on time in the modern science, which derives largely from analyzing the trajectory of movement.<sup>43</sup> As seen briefly above, time in modern science was built upon the equidistance of instants that enables us to calculate possible positions of a moving object. Let us say that an Object O proceeds to the points  $T_1, T_2, T_3, \dots$  on the line, starting from the origin  $T_0$ . Here, 1,2,3, ... are units of time where O is at the points  $T_1, T_2, T_3, \dots$ . From this, one can calculate where O will be at a certain time  $t$ , at the point  $T_t$ . As we divide the trajectory into points and use them to predict the future movement, we constitute time with the "virtual stopping places," assuming that the future movement is predictable. Deleuze says that with this characterization of time, the system becomes explicable and calculable in any given moment in virtue of the anterior moment: "It is as if the system dies and revives every moment, the following moment repeats the preceding moment."<sup>44</sup> This system grounds itself with the principle of repetition, a repetition of the preceding moment. It is in this sense that 'the whole' is assumed to be given in modern science. In the following we will see why this idea that 'the whole is given' is problematic.

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<sup>43</sup> Henri Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, trans. Arthur Mitchell (New York : The Modern Library, 1944), 337-338.

<sup>44</sup> Lecture on Cinema (*Cinema: Image-Mouvement*) - November 10, 1981, from *La Voix de Gilles Deleuze en ligne*, [http://www2.univ-paris8.fr/deleuze/article.php?id\\_article=17](http://www2.univ-paris8.fr/deleuze/article.php?id_article=17).

### 3.3 Time as an empty form

Deleuze's concern with time derived from movement is that it tends to be constructed with the repetitive elements of movement, either in the form of the cycle of movement or successive moments in movement. Then how can time be defined without reference to movement? Deleuze seems to find the possibility of this newly defined time in Kant's notion of time as a form. In his reading of Kant, he shows that Kant liberated time from any repeatable type or pattern of movement. He also made it clear that time as a form is to be distinguished from what happens in it.

This is where Deleuze diverges from Bergson. Bergson gives a critical reading of Kant, regarding specifically his notion of time and space as *a priori* forms of inner and outer intuition. According to him, Kant understood time as a 'homogenous medium' in which the states of consciousness unfold themselves. Bergson claims,

Kant's great mistake was to take time as a homogeneous medium. He did not notice that real duration is made up of moments inside one another, and that when it seems to assume the form of a homogeneous whole, it is because it gets expressed in space. Thus the very distinction which he makes between space and time amounts at bottom to confusing time with space.<sup>45</sup>

In his account of time, Kant uses the analogy of line to describe the succession of time and sees time as a container of what happens in it, in the same way space is a form. According to Bergson, Kant seems to believe that as we perceive material objects in space, our states of consciousness are juxtaposed in succession, external to one another. In this sense, Bergson argues that Kant's notion of time is an instance of spatialized time. Although Kant notices the difference between time and space as forms of internal and external intuition, he still conceives time as a homogeneous medium and since "homogeneity here consisting in the

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<sup>45</sup> Bergson, *Time and Free Will*, 232.

absence of every quality, it is hard to see how two forms of the homogenous could be distinguished from one another.”<sup>46</sup> For Bergson, when time is regarded as a homogenous medium of the states of consciousness, it is a mere projection of time onto space.

However, Deleuze sees in Kant the possibility of going beyond the idea of time subordinated to movement. In the preface to *Kant's Critical Philosophy*, Deleuze claims that it was Kant that first substituted the schema of cyclical time with time as straight line, where “the beginning and the end do not rhyme.” This reference to rhyme is drawn from Hölderlin’s reading of Oedipus in *Remarks on Sophocles*. He calls this ‘time that is out of joint.’

[T]ime out of joint signifies the reversal of the movement-time relationship. [...] Time is no longer related to the movement which it measures, but movement is related to the time which conditions it: this is the first great Kantian reversal in the *Critique of Pure Reason* (PCK, vii).

Let us remember that Deleuze explained the circular image of time in antiquity with the Greek tragedy, where we see the restoration of the order at the end. To describe the novel idea of time Kant suggested, Deleuze uses a line from Hamlet,<sup>47</sup> “time is out of joint (*le temps est hors de ses gonds*).” As Deleuze notes later in the text, the Latin word for ‘joint (*gond*)’ is ‘*cardo*,’ which means a hinge of the door or an axis around which the revolving objects turn. *Cardo* or cardinal point is what enables us to count the number of movements as well as the passing of time according to movements. In his commentary on Deleuze’s theory of time, Williams gives the examples of these cardinal points: “the number of times a

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 98.

<sup>47</sup> In the second lecture on cinema Deleuze also calls this a transition from tragedy to novel (Lecture on Cinema (*Cinema: Image-Mouvement*) - November 10, 1981, from *La voix de Gilles Deleuze en ligne*, [http://www2.univ-paris8.fr/deleuze/article.php?id\\_article=36](http://www2.univ-paris8.fr/deleuze/article.php?id_article=36)).

clock passes midday or a horoscope passes a birthday.”<sup>48</sup> If time concerns measuring the periodic movements, it would be subject to the cardinal points. In *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze writes: “The joint, *cardo*, is what ensures the subordination of time to those properly cardinal points through which pass the periodic movements which it measures (time, number of the movement, for the soul as much as for the world)” (DR 88/119).

When Deleuze says time is unhinged, it means that it no longer functions as the measure or the number of movement. To put it another way, it is a time that distributes a non-symmetrical before and after, since it does not refer to a movement where things are supposed to come back to their original place or their own ‘natural’ place. Deleuze calls this a reversal of the relationship between movement and time.

But how is this ‘a great Kantian reversal’? In order to answer this question, we need to look briefly at Deleuze’s view of Kant’s notion of time. He emphasizes that Kant, in defining time as a pure form of intuition, made time itself “an immutable form” of everything that changes and moves. Deleuze draws from Kant the distinction between what is *presented* and *represented*;<sup>49</sup> the former indicates that which presents itself to us as manifold/diversity (PCK 8/14), whereas the prefix ‘*re-*’ in the notion of *re*-presentation implies an active ‘taking up’ of what is presented. Representation concerns “an activity and a unity distinct from the passivity and diversity” (ibid.). But since sensibility is defined as pure passivity in Kant, it cannot be a source of representations. Thus intuition, the form of which is pure passivity, is not a representation. Deleuze says that the phenomenon in Kant is not appearance [*apparence*]- which is usually paired with the essence behind it – but

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<sup>48</sup> James Williams, *Gilles Deleuze's Philosophy of Time: A Critical Introduction and Guide* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011), 88.

<sup>49</sup> In the section on the unconscious synthesis in Chapter II, we will see that this distinction was taken from a Post-Kantian thinker, Salomon Maimon’s distinction between *Vorstellung* and *Darstellung*.



‘appearing [*apparition*].’ He writes that time as the form of all possible appearing is “the only thing which sensibility presents *a priori*” (ibid.). In Kant, what presents itself to us is not only empirical diversity in time but also the pure *a priori* diversity of time. Time as the *a priori* presentation is the form of all that changes, without being changed itself. As we will see in the following, in Kant, even ‘the self’ in our reflection is considered as a sort of intuition given under the form of time in this regard.

In this section, we have seen Deleuze’s view on the relationship between time and movement. It seems to me that Deleuze’s discussion of the time subordinated to movement is a critique of the idea of *repetition* that underlies the eternal Form in antiquity and the mechanistic worldview in modernity. In antiquity, time was largely considered to be repetition since the Whole was presupposed in the form of the completion of the cycle in the movement of the celestial bodies. In modernity, the need to discover the principle by which the universe as a system operates led to the idea of time as a succession of homogeneous instants. It was supposed that the universe at any instant, governed by the same principle, is predictable. It is a repetition not in the sense of circular time, but of the principle applied to every moment. These notions of time, where the whole is assumed to be given, suggest ‘the return of the same.’ When Deleuze talks about the reversal of time and movement, he is posing a problem of time, the form of which is predetermined by the repetitive movement. He suggests instead that we understand time as liberated from its content, so that time would not function as limits of movements, but as a form of change that all the movements are subject to, i.e. an empty form that allows *difference*. We will examine further in the following section Deleuze’s conception of time as ‘differentiation from itself’ and how this new form of time relates to his larger project, the philosophy of difference.

#### 4. Deleuze's notion of time: Temporalized difference

We began with the problem Deleuze poses of the subordination of time to movement and demonstrated it with the definitions of time in antiquity and in modern science. According to them, time takes either a circular or linear form, depending on the kind of movement they referred to. Now we will turn to Deleuze's own understanding of time.

Deleuze's critique of the traditional notion of time can be summarized as the following: time had been understood in terms of what happens in it, thus as something secondary to that which moves or changes. Consequently, time was reconstructed either with the privileged positions or substituted by the traversed space. But in doing so, we always miss certain aspect of time, since time cannot be reduced to either of them. Thus he suggests that time be conceived as in itself rather than reconstructed from the traces of movement or events. He sees the possibility of doing so in Kant, in his definition of time as a pure form. Deleuze wants to show that there is, in fact, no unchanging substance that underlies change or movement, but all things are *in* time, and thus changing. In this sense, movement is subject to time, not the other way around. Time is the only unchanging form to which all that changes is subject to.

I contended above that what Deleuze really aims to critique through 'time subordinated to movement' is the time of repetition, whether it is derived from circular movement or repetition of previous instants.<sup>50</sup> In this section we will see the implications of the reversal of time and movement in relation to his philosophy of difference, where he

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<sup>50</sup> Deleuze will later reinvent and complicate the notion of repetition, but here it simply means the recurrence of the same. When repetition is thought under the identity, it is the repetition of the same; but if identity is put into question, what's repeated would necessarily accompany differences every time it is repeated.

articulates the concept of difference that is not derived from, thus prior to identity. I will argue that Deleuze reads Bergson's theory of time in a Kantian framework. He makes use of Bergson's notion of duration in his reading of the traditional notions of time in philosophy, however, as he develops his own theory of time, his concern shifts from duration to *difference*. As will be shown, Deleuze modifies the idea of duration significantly when he characterizes it as 'internal difference.' I will claim that Kant is the most important thinker for Deleuze in this transition from duration to difference. This is a significant moment for Deleuze not only because it shows why it is necessary to think difference in terms of temporality in establishing his philosophy of difference, but also it sets the ground for his account of 'the passive synthesis of time' he introduces later in *Difference and Repetition*.

#### **4.1 Time and the notion of difference: Time as self-differentiation**

It is perhaps in the essay "Bergson's Conception of Difference" (1956)<sup>51</sup> that the relationship between time and difference in Deleuze's system is best elaborated. I believe this essay is particularly important since it shows how Deleuze develops the notion of difference from Bergson's idea of duration. On the one hand, we see that duration serves as a crucial idea that introduces qualitative difference to time in Deleuze; instead of reconstructing time with successive instants external to one another, Bergson sees time as a whole that goes through qualitative change every moment. This characterization of time inspired Deleuze to articulate difference in temporal process. There is no doubt that Deleuze's definition of time as "that which differs from itself (*ce qui diffère avec soi*)" (BCD 51) comes from Bergson's notion of duration as a continuous, qualitative multiplicity. As an early attempt to think difference in terms of time, this essay anticipates his project of

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<sup>51</sup> Henceforth abbreviated as BCD. This article first appears in *Les études bergsoniennes* (1956) under the title "*La conception de la différence chez Bergson*."

redefining the concept of difference that actualizes more than ten years later in *Difference and Repetition*. On the other hand, the essay describes the shift in focus of Deleuze's reading of Bergson, I argue, from duration to difference. By reconstructing Bergson's account of time around the notion of internal difference, which is Kant's terminology, Deleuze introduces a creative reading of the idea of duration.

The main idea of the essay is that time as duration can be conceived as the difference of self from self, thus *internal* difference. To put it in another way, the concept of difference that he attempts to articulate is conceived as differentiation in time or 'temporalized' difference.<sup>52</sup> Given that Deleuze begins with the notion of duration, which he defines as what differs from itself, characterizing time as internal difference may seem to be circular. But what interests us more is not the definition of time as a force of differentiation itself, but what it entails.

In the beginning of the essay, Deleuze explains the limitations of conceptualizing difference in spatial terms, under the Bergsonian framework. According to him, spatial understanding presents us only *external* difference. He writes, "[w]hat space presents to the understanding, and what understanding finds in space, are only things, i.e. products or results." (BCD 34/46) When considered in spatial terms, the difference would be situated between things that exist in space. As we have seen in the section on Bergson's theory of multiplicity, things in space as quantitative multiplicity relate to one another in terms of externality and juxtaposition. Thus difference between things that are in external relation to each other can also be called external difference. When Deleuze says what is given in space – "things" – is only an end product, he seems to imply that there is a more fundamental

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<sup>52</sup> I borrowed this term from Borradori's articulation of internal difference as "temporalization of difference."; see Giovanna Borradori, "The Temporalization of Difference: Reflections on Deleuze's interpretation of Bergson," *Continental Philosophy Review* 34 (2001): 1–20.

process that the things are resulted from. In other words, when he calls difference in space external, or difference between results, he is suggesting that there is more fundamental difference that makes the thing what it is *from within*: internal difference. Because our faculty of understanding tends to translate continuous and qualitative process into discrete and quantitative change, Deleuze claims that articulating internal difference requires a method that is “something other than a spatial analysis, more than a description of experience, and less (so it seems) than a transcendental analysis” (BCD 36/49). In short, thinking internal difference requires a temporal analysis rather than a spatial one, and that it is what makes the external difference possible.

In order to describe the two kinds of difference, Deleuze seems to utilize a set of opposing terms. Here are some of the examples we will take a look at:

Difference in Space	Difference in Time
External	Internal
Substance	Change/ Movement (Substance redefined)
Contradiction/ Negation	Self-differentiation
The determinations ( <i>les déterminations</i> )	THE Determination ( <i>LA détermination</i> )

Table 1. Spatial- Temporal Difference

In addition to the distinction between internal and external difference, Deleuze suggests that we rethink the notion of substance in terms of difference. In the following passage, he makes a number of important claims:

In a word, duration is what differs, and this is no longer what differs from other things, but what differs from itself. What differs has itself become a thing, a *substance*. [...] And just as difference has become a substance, so movement is no longer the characteristic of something, but has itself acquired a substantial character. It presupposes nothing else, no body in motion. Duration or tendency is the difference of self with itself; and what differs from itself is, in an *unmediated* way, the unity of substance and subject (BCD, 37-38/51-52).

In this puzzling passage, Deleuze seems to make the following claims:

- (1) Time as duration is 'what differs from itself' or the difference of self with itself.
- (2) Difference (in time) has become a thing, a substance (Subsequently, movement presupposes no body in motion).
- (3) What differs from itself is the unity of substance and subject.

Let us begin with the claim (1), 'time as self-differentiation.' As noted, Bergson sees time as a whole that goes through qualitative change. When it comes to duration as a continuous, qualitative multiplicity, difference does not concern its relation to other things, but its relation to itself. That is, the relation of the whole and itself with qualitative changes. Given the claim (3), which we will not immediately engage in, Deleuze has Hegel in mind in his reading of Bergson here. Defining time as self-differentiation is important for him precisely because difference understood temporally through duration is a generative, vital force (*élan vital*) in *immediately* differentiating from the self, without supposing negativity, that is, its relation with other things (what it is not).

Later in the essay Deleuze draws our attention to Bergson's example of color to show how difference can be an underlying thing that generates other things. Bergson contrasts two ways of thinking what colors have in common: first we can try to define the concept of color by eliminating the particularity of each shade, that is, by dismissing in red what makes it red, and so on. In this case we get a general, abstract idea of color under which different colors are subsumed. In contrast, we can get 'pure white light' by putting different colors together through a convergent lens. As opposed to the former, where the concept and the colors are externally related, in the latter a white light as a power to become different colors produces the differences that are internal to it. If the former is the spatial distinctions of colors, the latter shows a difference as temporal variation where different shades are conceived as "possible coexistence" of the white light (BCD 44/61).

The claim (2) concerns the notion of substance and, what I will call, 'substance-based

notion of time.’ Earlier we said that with the reversal of time and movement, time is not a time of something but a form of change that everything else is subjected to. Deleuze does not talk about time in terms of unchanging form here, but he is emphasizing the primacy of time, that is not secondary to movement or a thing that moves. Time does not belong to a body in motion as long as the moving body is subject to change.<sup>53</sup> As the only form that is not subject to change, time takes a role of the ground, in the sense that it does not presuppose anything for it to be there.

This role of the ground with nothing presupposed has traditionally been taken by *substance* in philosophy. The term substance (ὕποκειμενον: ‘to lie under’) refers to that which underlies things or that which stands by itself independently of properties or events. In a broader sense, it can also mean individual things or subjects upon which predicates depend.<sup>54</sup> With regard to time, it concerns an underlying thing that remains unchanged through the course of change. Given this existing definition of substance, Deleuze’s claim that time as self-differentiation itself becomes a substance seems to be absurd.<sup>55</sup> Far from “the unity of substance and subject,” time appears to denounce it by exposing things to change and multiplicity. Also in (2), Deleuze argues that when time is understood as what differs from itself, movement is no longer a movement of some *thing*, as it presupposes no ‘body’ that moves. When there is a movement, shouldn’t there be a thing that goes through change?

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<sup>53</sup> In the metaphor of the hinge (*cardo*) of a door Deleuze uses in relation to the time “out of joint,” the revolving motion belongs to the door as long as it repeats itself around the hinge. If the movement gets ‘off the hinges,’ it would not be repeated or seen as a movement of the door.

<sup>54</sup> See Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, Book VII, 1029a 2-3 in *The Complete Works of Aristotle: The Revised Oxford Translation*, Vol.2, edit. Jonathan Barnes, trans. William David Ross (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995).

<sup>55</sup> In *Bergsonism*, Deleuze defines duration as “a becoming that endures, a change that is substance itself” (B 37).

I do not think that Deleuze is trying to deny altogether the idea of individual substances or the apparent existence of bodies and things in motion that constitute our ordinary experience of time. Rather, he is suggesting that what we call substance is in fact the results or products of a more profound process, what Deleuze calls a “movement of difference.” Therefore, when he says time itself becomes a substance, the term substance would not mean what it used to refer to. Time understood as the revised notion of substance would have to be defined something like this: *an underlying difference that produces ‘things’ or the unity of substance and subject.*

One way to think about substance is through Deleuze’s example given in the *Logic of Sense*, the discussion of subsistent infinitives. He explains the notion of substance in terms of an infinitive instead of a noun, using the example of the phrase “the tree greens.”<sup>56</sup> When we refer to a green tree, the substance/ subject is not the tree that has a property ‘green’ but a power ‘to green.’ Substance is not what holds properties or attributes but it itself is understood as a power to become them. What appear to be “things” and their properties to us are in fact the expressions or variations of substance. Accordingly, difference is understood not as a matter of substance possessing different properties or different determinations, but of substance playing out its own power to differentiate. This is what Deleuze means when he says, “difference has become a substance” in the above passage.

But what does it mean to think time in terms of difference? What is the problem with the ‘substance-based’ time? As noted above, a substance (*S*) is, by its definition, what *survives* change. If we are to understand time in terms of what *S* is, the past would simply be the previous states of *S*, or the totality of them stacked up over time. Deleuze, drawing on

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<sup>56</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, trans. Mark Lester (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 20-21; see also Claire Colebrook’s entry “Substance” in *The Deleuze Dictionary*, edit. Adrian Parr (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005), 278-279.



Bergson, claims that it is important to consider the past without attributing it to individual substances, in order to reveal the dynamic relations between the past and the present; the past continues to operate and to be reconstructed in the present. With regard to the future, the substance-based notion of time, assuming that which exists independently of changeable properties, cannot sufficiently account for how ‘the new’ is produced. For example, in ancient thought, the future dimension of time is related to the idea of ‘Perfect Year,’ in which all of the celestial bodies are believed to return to their original position. Plato calls this ‘the circle of the same.’<sup>57</sup> Also, the mechanical notion of time introduced by modern technologies operates upon the calculability of the future. The future of *S* as its virtual states makes time open, but only to the extent that the future tendency is presumably predictable by observing its present state.

In order to avoid reducing time to that of individual substances, Deleuze suggests that we think of ‘a whole’ that goes through qualitative change, which individual substances are only the manifestations of. Such a whole is ‘the open,’ as it becomes something other than itself in its qualitative change. Since the whole has nothing external to it, the only movement observed in it would be the movement of ‘self-differentiation.’ If there is only the movement of the whole, and if there is no substance to which the movement can be attributed to, time cannot be conceived as a measure: “Time itself unfolds instead of things unfolding within it [...] time is no longer subordinated to movement” (DR 88-89/120). Therefore, Deleuze claims that time is a form in which the whole differs from itself and that ‘what differs from itself’ replaces the notion of substance (BCD 37/52). Time, in this sense,

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<sup>57</sup> “It is none the less possible, however, to discern that the perfect number of time brings to completion the perfect year at that moment when the relative speeds of all eight periods have been completed together and, measured by the circle of the Same that moves uniformly, have achieved their consummation” (Plato *Timaeus*, 39d).

is a vehicle for the production of difference, through which any substance – including the subject – is produced.

This idea of time as substance thus changes the relationship between other pairs of philosophical terms in the Table 1, such as identity/difference, unity/ multiplicity and determination / differentiation. When time as what differs from itself becomes substance, the latter terms of these sets become primary: identity is derived from difference rather than presupposed. That is, difference would not be situated between things that are already determined, with its presupposed identity, but in the power of differentiation internal to time itself. Thus Deleuze notes that “difference is not a determination but, in its essential relation to life, a *differentiation (différenciation)*” (my emphasis, BCD 40/55).

## **4.2 Time as internal difference: Auto-affection**

### **Contradiction vs. Self-differentiation**

Let us now proceed to the third and the fourth rows of the Table 1: contradiction/negation vs. self-differentiation, and the determinations vs. The Determination. In *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze notes that “[t]he difference ‘between’ two things is only empirical, and *the* corresponding determinations are only extrinsic. However, instead of something that distinguishes itself from something else, imagine something which distinguishes itself (*Mais au lieu d’une chose qui se distingue d’autre chose, imaginons quelque chose qui se distingue*)[...]” (translation modified, DR 28/43). Let us begin with what he calls empirical and extrinsic (or external) difference. In a bigger picture, this concerns Deleuze’s critique of the dialectical method in articulating difference. I am not interested in exploring his argument against the dialectic – which is developed in *Difference and Repetition* in great detail –, or evaluating it. I want to simply show how Deleuze

distinguishes his way of thinking difference from others. In this essay, he claims that both in Plato and in Hegel the account for difference is based on the relations of negation and contradiction. Specifically, Deleuze argues that in Hegel “the thing differs from itself because it differs first from everything it is not, and thus difference goes as far as contradiction” (BCD 42/58). That is to say, difference in Hegel lies in the logical relation of negation, A and not-A. For example, we can speak about the difference of a book, only by considering it with reference to other books, and to all the other objects that are not books. Deleuze contends that this is a way of thinking difference in space where things relate to one another externally. When the difference of a term is considered in relation to what it is not, this difference can be said negative as well as external. Therefore, Deleuze seems to use “negative” and “external” interchangeably as Borradori notes.<sup>58</sup>

Unlike the difference in Hegel’s account, difference in time is not defined by negative, external relations. Then how can something be said different when it is not in relation to what it is not? It still has a relation with itself in time. In the above passage, Deleuze explains this in the language of ‘something that distinguishes itself’ without reference to anything external to it. When considered temporally, difference need not involve any external relations. This is how Deleuze puts it:

[W]e *think* duration differs from itself because it is first the product of two contrary determinations, but we forget that it differentiated itself because it is first that which differs from itself [*elle s’est différenciée parce qu’elle était d’abord ce qui diffère avec soi*]. [...] It is our ignorance of the virtual that makes us believe in contradiction and negation (BCD, 42-43/59).

The notion of self-differentiation is essential in defining time as a power to produce internal difference. As we have seen above, if time as substance is a power of becoming, it is able to

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<sup>58</sup> Giovanna Borradori, “The Temporalization of Difference: Reflections on Deleuze’s Interpretation of Bergson,” *Continental Philosophy Review* 34 (2001): 1–20. 2.

become what it is not only by differentiating from itself. Deleuze claims that it is by this movement of difference in time that two terms that seem to logically negate one another are produced. Here Deleuze attempts to explain how things are produced internally solely by the self-differentiation of time. Time as differentiation is a whole – an open whole – not in the sense of the totality of determinations, but in the sense that there is nothing external to it. The whole cannot distinguish itself from something else but only from itself since it does not have the exterior. This is why Deleuze warns us not to think duration in terms of determination or the product of determinations. We will see more closely what he means by determination.

### **The determinations vs. THE Determination**

In this regard, it is true that Deleuze deploys Bergson's idea of internal difference against Hegel's idea of contradiction as Widder states.<sup>59</sup> However, I will show in what follows that Deleuze's definition of time as self-differentiation is Kantian as much as it is Bergsonian. To begin with, Deleuze reconstructs Bergson's account of time around 'internal difference,' the term Bergson does not use to describe duration; the shift in Deleuze's concern from duration to difference becomes the point of departure where he develops his own thought, philosophy of difference, by distinguishing himself from Bergson. The most important reference for him in this transition is, I argue, Kant. Here are two reasons why I

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<sup>59</sup> "Deleuze contends that *Duration and Simultaneity* does not invoke a new psychologism but instead challenges the physicist for confusing different types of multiplicity and continuing to treat time as the counting of instants, Bergson offering the alternative metaphysics that modern physics needs. And he argues that the significance of Bergson's late work is that it demonstrates the process by which duration, as difference actualizing itself, underpins social and moral history. Both defences accord with Deleuze's larger thesis that duration's structure of a virtual past contracted into the actual present and propelling time into an open future expresses a conception of internal difference, which Deleuze deploys explicitly against a Hegelian conception of internal difference as contradiction" (Nathan Widder, "From Duration to Eternal Return," in *Time and History in Deleuze and Serres*, edit. Bernd Herzogenrath (New York: Continuum, 2012), 127-128). In this essay, Widder claims that Bergson's influence on Deleuze was significant but limited, given the fact that he deploys the idea of discontinuity from Nietzsche's conception of difference in quantity and the will to power.

believe so: First, when Deleuze uses the term ‘determination,’ it mostly refers to Kant’s achievement in relation to Descartes’s cogito.<sup>60</sup> Second, Deleuze’s emphasis on Kant’s ‘Paradox of inner sense’<sup>61</sup> strongly suggests a possibility that the internality of time comes from Kant’s definition of time as the form of interiority.

Let us remember that in the passages above Deleuze distinguishes internal difference in time not only from external difference but also from determinations. In *Difference and Repetition*, he makes a distinction between the determinations (*les déterminations*) and ‘THE Determination (*LA détermination*).’ He describes internal difference as “transcendental Difference between the Determination as such and what it determines” as opposed to “empirical difference between two determinations” (DR 86/ 116). This phrase is followed by his reading of Kant, where he elaborates the difference between the Kantian cogito and the Cartesian one. According to Deleuze, Kant discovered what is missing in the Cartesian formula ‘I think, therefore I am.’ Here ‘I think’ (determination) determines what I am (the undetermined), as ‘a thing that thinks.’ That is to say, the determination ‘I think’ is supposed to imply directly the undetermined ‘I am.’ Deleuze notes that Kant found this insufficient and claimed that there must be a third term that links the determination and the indeterminate. Then under what form is the indeterminate existence (I am) determinable? For Kant, this is the form of *time*. Time is a form through which the undetermined I becomes determinable. In Deleuze’s terms, time as differentiation is what makes the determinations possible, thus needs to be distinguished from them. Time as a middle term for determination is what is missing in Descartes’s cogito, which relies on the existence of

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<sup>60</sup> Apart from the reference to Kant, the term “determination” also appears in the discussion of Artaud and Abel in DR.

<sup>61</sup> See DR 86/116-117, and Lecture on Kant - March, 21, 1978 (<http://www.webdeleuze.com/php/texte.php?cle=58&groupe=Kant&langue=1>).

God.<sup>62</sup>

### **Time as ‘auto-affection’**

In order to see what this middle term implies, Deleuze draws our attention to Kant’s discussion of the paradox of inner sense. According to Kant, when the outside objects appear to us, they appear in the form of outer sense, which is space; things that are in space appear external to us and to one another. In this sense space is the form of exteriority. But the paradox occurs when we try to intuit ourselves. Kant writes in the first critique,

Inner sense [...] represents to consciousness even our own selves only as we appear to ourselves, not as we are in ourselves. For we intuit ourselves only as we are inwardly affected, and this would seem to be contradictory, since we should then have to be in a passive relation to ourselves (CPR, B 153).

In the activity of thinking, there is a split between the I that thinks and the I that is being thought, the latter of which is given to us in the way that the external objects appear to us. In other words, ‘the I’ can be given or represented to me only in the manner in which I *appear* to myself, rather than I as being in myself. Thus there is a sense in which ‘the I’ becomes passive in relation to itself when the activity of thinking turns inward. Kant stresses that I am given to myself “not as I am for the understanding but rather as I appear to myself” (CPR, B155). In thinking –an internal dialogue –, the I represents passivity as well as activity. On the one hand, I am an active, spontaneous subject of thinking. On the other hand, this *I* in the ‘I think’ becomes an object in ‘I think that *I* think.’ Thinking is a repeated circular movement between the I (thinking I) and the I (being thought), while producing the formula: I think (that I think (that I think...)). We might say that in turning the I as a subject into the I as an object of thinking, there is a temporal delay. So, what

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<sup>62</sup> As a momentary self, the Cartesian cogito has to be preserved by something other than itself (*aliqua causa*) to exist continuously. Only God can be the cause of the cogito’s continuity over time.

makes the I divided into two is time. Kant says that the subject can represent itself only by the affection of a passive self, *auto-affection*. The form of self-affection is time, which is the form of interiority. The subject can know itself only as it appears within time.<sup>63</sup>

It seems to me that what Deleuze finds intriguing in Kant's account of time is that it presents the way the subject experiences time, understood as auto-affection, or self-differentiation. This is why the discussion of 'Paradox of inner sense,' where Kant talks about the problem of double-sided subject in self-knowledge, is particularly interesting for Deleuze. In his book on Foucault where he raises the problem of subjectification (*subjectivation*), Deleuze claims that Kant's paradox of inner sense reveals the temporal structure of subjectivity while summarizing his reading of Kantian time as auto-affection. Deleuze writes,

According to Kant, time was the form in which the mind affected itself, just as space was the form in which the mind was affected by something else: time was therefore 'auto-affection' and made up the essential structure of subjectivity (F 107/115).

What about the structure of subjectivity does the notion of time as self-affection reveal? For Deleuze, it is the division between the fractured I (*Je*), and the passive self (*moi*). He writes that in Kant "[i]t is as though the *I* were fractured from one end to the other: fractured by the pure and empty form of time. [...] Time signifies a fault or a fracture in the I and a passivity in the self [...]" (DR 86/117). If the undetermined I becomes determinable only by temporally differentiating itself from itself, it is time, paradoxically, that plays an active role in the determination of the subject. For Deleuze, that the subject inevitably becomes passive in its relation to time is important since it suggests that the passivity of the I as "a capacity to experience affections" (DR 87/117-118) is not simply receptivity but a constitutive power.

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<sup>63</sup> Heidegger focuses on this point in his reading of Kant. For the discussions on the experience of auto-affection, see Leonard Lawlor, "Auto-Affection and Becoming," in *Environmental Philosophy* 6, no. 1 (2009): 1-19.

In other words, there can be a synthesis of time – which is passive itself – that constitutes the I on the level of receptive sensibility. As we will see in the following chapter, Deleuze will call this a *passive synthesis of time*.

Kant did not pursue his innovative idea of the fractured I, according to Deleuze; although Kant substituted a self fractured by a line of time for the substantial self (DR 136/178), “the fracture is quickly filled by a new form of identity – namely, active synthetic identity; whereas the passive self is defined only by receptivity and, as such, endowed with no power of synthesis. [...] here, synthesis is understood as active and as giving rise to a new form of identity in the I, while passivity is understood as simple receptivity without synthesis” (DR 87/117-118). It was Kant’s insight that there is something in sensible intuition that cannot be reduced to, or grasped by concepts of the understanding. This observation opened up the possibility of understanding time as a form, independently of its content as in the order of heavenly bodies or the number of movement. However, this leaves him with the problem of how the two faculties of a very different nature, receptive sensibility and active understanding, can work together in accord. Kant believed that this duality could be resolved by the synthesis that is carried out by imagination but requires the unity of consciousness. Deleuze’s book on Kant presents the relationship of the faculties as a central problem of the first critique. Kant’s project was essentially to define the condition for the subject’s *a priori* knowledge. To secure the possibility of knowledge, Kant posited the form of the object in general (object=X) as the correlate of the ‘I think.’ He thought that the manifold would not be referred to an object unless we already have a form of object. Although Kant ascribes synthesis to the faculty of imagination, this form of object ultimately derives from the understanding. Therefore, the objects of intuition become



subordinated to understanding as the legislative faculty, rather than imagination. It is the unity of consciousness that enables the spatio-temporal relation subject to the categories of the understanding.

Let us note that Deleuze is bringing together here Bergson's idea of duration as that which differs and Kant's characterization of time as auto-affection. When Deleuze establishes the idea of temporalized difference by redefining duration as 'that which differs from itself,' it appears that he had in mind the notion of time as auto-affection, which is temporal difference of the self from itself. In his book on cinema Deleuze writes, "Bergson is much closer to Kant than he himself thinks: Kant defined time as the form of interiority, in the sense that we are internal to time" (C2, 82/110). However, what Deleuze creates by synthesizing the two does not resemble either of them. As he transformed the theory of duration into the theory of difference, he reconstructs Kant's account of time as the theory of the passive self in relation to time; Deleuze relates the power of time to differ from itself to the time beyond the unified subject, beyond consciousness. In this sense, for Deleuze, Kant becomes the figure who opened up the possibility of 'time beyond consciousness.'<sup>64</sup> Deleuze's account of the unconscious time, despite its debt to Bergson and Kant, is genuinely an invention, given that duration for Bergson was coextensive as consciousness in the early works such as *Time and Free Will* (*L'Essai*), and that the very ground for our experience in Kant was not the split between the I and the self, but the transcendental unity of apperception.

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<sup>64</sup> I limit my discussion on Deleuze's Kantian reading of Bergson to 'internal difference' and temporal difference. However, for the comprehensive understanding of Kant's influence on Deleuze's reading of Bergson, one must look at the notion of intensity; it is on the notion of intensity that Deleuze disagrees with Bergson and turns to Kant. Deleuze goes as far as to claim that duration must be thought in terms of intensive difference. When he writes "[b]efore the distinction between difference of degree and difference in kind, there is intensity" (DR 239/308), he targets Bergson directly by reviving Kant's idea of intensity.

In this chapter, we have seen how Deleuze's view on the relationship between time and movement developed from his reading of Bergson and Kant. I have shown that Deleuze's critical remarks on the subordination of time to movement aim at establishing the notion of time as a force of differentiation. I have also discussed the implications of his reference to Kant's idea of time as an empty form and a form of auto-affection; I argued that the significance of understanding time as self-differentiation lies in the way time defined as such relates to the subject, and that this is why Deleuze was particularly interested in Kant's account of auto-affection, where the subject becomes passive in respect to time in representing itself. In the following chapters, we will further examine this relationship of time and the subject. In Chapter II, I give an extensive analysis of Deleuze's three passive syntheses of time that account for the production of subjectivity in the three modalities of time – present, past and future. When we get to Chapter III, we shift our focus from ontological account of time to socio-economic temporalities, and revisit the idea of time subordinated to movement, in our attempt to examine the relation between time and the movement of financial capital.

## II. Time and Subjectivity: Deleuze's Three Syntheses of Time

In Chapter I, we have seen Deleuze's critique of the traditional conception of time that is subordinate to movement. By synthesizing Bergson's view of time as duration and Kant's notion of auto-affection, Deleuze suggests the possibility of reconceiving time in terms of temporalized difference. This newly defined time as a force to self-differentiate also calls into question the notion of the subject as a substance that is supposed to endure through time. In this chapter, we will look more closely at the role of time in the subject formation by analyzing Deleuze's passive synthesis of time given in the second chapter of *Difference and Repetition*, especially the pages 70-96 (96-128). I will provide an expository account of the three syntheses developed in these remarkably dense pages, while concentrating on the question of the relationship between time and subjectivity; as time is reconceived as a structure that constitutes the subject rather than a subjective form of experience, the subject is no longer taken as an independent substance, but as a result of a temporal synthesis. We shall see that Deleuze's account of the syntheses is not only a theory of time, but more importantly, a theory of the subject based on the notion of 'the fractured I' or 'dissolved self.'

One might wonder why we need to look to Deleuze to examine the relationship between time and subjectivity, when it has already been recognized and taken up by the thinkers in the phenomenological tradition as a central problem. A comprehensive answer to this question requires a historical consideration of Deleuze's relationship to phenomenology, for which this chapter cannot possibly provide an exhaustive account.<sup>65</sup> A

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<sup>65</sup> See for instance, Éric Alliez's *De l'impossibilité de la phénoménologie: Sur la philosophie française contemporaine* (Paris: Vrin, 1995), where the author discusses how French philosophy since the early 1980s developed, departing from what it poses as the contemporary impossibility of phenomenology. For the comparative

short answer would be the following: For the purpose of our inquiry, I find Deleuze to be particularly insightful in that he provides, as my reading will illuminate, an account of the subject formation both in terms of the ontological structure of time and of the socio-economic structure of capitalism. This chapter will establish the ontological ground for the production of the subject as a temporal synthesis, which will be considered with respect to the temporality of capital in Chapters III and IV.

The central aim of this chapter is to frame the temporal synthesis as a process of subject formation, which Deleuze later calls ‘subjectification (*subjectivation*).’ For this purpose, I focus on Deleuze’s treatment of memory in the three syntheses that he claims to be crucial in subjectification as a temporal process. I claim that Deleuze’s concept of ‘Memory’ (or pure past) developed from Bergson’s theory of pure memory and his conception of Nietzsche’s ‘Forgetting’ make up the temporal structure that produces the subject. By temporal structure I mean the relationship of the present with the past and the future. To see time as a structure entails understanding the present is not simply given, but produced by a temporal synthesis; in Deleuze’s system, we see that the ontological Memory represents a repetition of the past coexisting with the present and that Forgetting makes this repetition as a repetition of the different. It follows that the present subject is a product of certain temporal relations, with differing degrees of repetition and novelty. It is my

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analysis of Deleuze and Merleau-Ponty, see Leonard Lawlor, *Thinking Through French Philosophy* (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2003), especially the chapters on Deleuze and Merleau-Ponty (“The End of Phenomenology: Expressionism in Deleuze and Merleau-Ponty,” & “The End of Ontology: Interrogation in Merleau-Ponty and Deleuze”); Fred Evans’s “Unnatural Participation: Merleau-Ponty, Deleuze and Environmental Ethics,” *Philosophy Today* 54 (2010): 142-152; Pierre Montebello’s “Deleuze, une Anti-Phénoménologie?,” *Academia* (Retrieved from [https://www.academia.edu/22639068/Deleuze\\_une\\_Anti-Ph%C3%A9nom%C3%A9nologie](https://www.academia.edu/22639068/Deleuze_une_Anti-Ph%C3%A9nom%C3%A9nologie)) that explains in which sense Deleuze chose Bergson as his philosophical inspiration *contra* Merleau-Ponty; Jack Reynolds & Jon Roffe’s “Deleuze and Merleau-Ponty: Immanence, Univocity, and Phenomenology,” *Journal of the British Society of Phenomenology* 37, no.3 (2006): 228-51. For Deleuze’s relation with Husserl, see Joe Hughes’s analysis of the problem of genesis in Husserl and Deleuze in *Deleuze and the Genesis of Representation* (London & New York: Continuum, 2008).

contention that the production of subjectivity should be understood in terms of the Memory-Forgetting relation, which exceeds individual consciousness. This chapter will also prepare the readers for the link between Deleuze's view on time in his early works and his analysis of the subjectification in capitalism that appears in his later collective works with Félix Guattari, discussed in the following chapters.

But when we say that time is not a subjective form but constitutive of the subject, what kind of time are we talking about? How can the subject be passive in respect to time? Let us take the example of memory; there is a kind of memory that concerns recalling past events. When I try to remember what I did on May Day three years ago and think of the people I met in the metro and the song I heard in the streets, the function of memory concerns a reproduction of the images. When we try to recall something, we seem to retreat from what is happening in the present so as to place ourselves in the pool of memories – what Deleuze calls 'the past in general' – and then choose a specific image or information that we are searching for. We may call this a *voluntary* memory in the sense that we can bring ourselves to it when we want to at will. But there is another kind of memory that is *involuntary* or unconscious. It can be triggered by a sensation, such as a melody or a smell that brings us back to a certain moment in the past. These elements of the past that suddenly appear without a conscious effort to recall can be powerful and even disruptive. As in the case of flashbacks, one may feel that she is reliving the past moment in the present. That there is an unconscious memory suggests that the subject can be put in a passive relation to time. The subject can actively engage the past in the present moment by the active exercise of recalling, but can also be affected or interrupted by the past in any given moment. The subject is 'subject to' time both in actively engaging herself in temporal life, but at the same

time, is passively affected by the irresistible force of time. Deleuze's passive synthesis will be useful to examine what sort of 'temporal structure' enables this to happen.

This paradoxical relationship between time and the subject makes Kant a key figure for understanding Deleuze's synthesis as a theory of subjectification. As we saw in Chapter I, Deleuze finds the dual structure of the subject in Kant's distinction between the transcendental subject and the empirical self. Deleuze appreciates Kant's notion of time as a form of auto-affectation, which expresses the split between the active 'thinking I' and the passive 'self.' But he laments that Kant did not pursue the idea of this double structure of the subject, when he posits the *unity* of transcendental subject as a ground for the possibility of experience.<sup>66</sup> Instead of presupposing the transcendental unity of apperception that secures the synthetic identity, Deleuze sees the 'doubling' of the subject and its relation to time as the essential structure of subjectivity. Therefore, we will begin this chapter by explaining how Deleuze develops his theory of temporal synthesis by revising Kant's synthesis.

Drawing on Maimon's critique of the Kantian notion 'transcendental,' he argues that synthesis can be a passive, generative process that does not require a synthetic unity as a ground. In the second section, we look specifically at how Deleuze modifies 'the transcendental' as a temporal synthesis based on Bergson's concept of the virtual, while explicating the details of Deleuze's argument in the three syntheses. As noted earlier, Memory – empirical and transcendental – will be the key notion here. When we get to the last section, we will observe the reversal of time and the subject, which is analogous to the reversal of time and movement: "Subjectivity is never ours, it is time, that is, the soul, or the spirit, the virtual" (C2, 83/111). We see that time is not an *a priori* form of sensibility but a

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<sup>66</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) (Henceforth abbreviated as CPR), A106.

form of the formation of the subject itself, through the doubling between the self and an 'other.'

We will see that Deleuze's synthesis of time concerns a temporality that conditions the ordinary experience of time demarcated by the limit of consciousness. Thus we may say that it elaborates the time of 'the unconscious' underlying consciously experienced time. We will not discuss Deleuze's psychoanalytic account of the syntheses here, but the notion of primordial repetition will be crucial. Earlier we said that Deleuze critiques the idea of repetition underlying the traditional theories of time. However, the notion will take on a different meaning in this chapter. In his passive synthesis of time, Deleuze explains three modalities of time – past, present and future – in terms of *repetition*, which turns out to be the production of difference in time. As what constitutes 'the unconscious,' the passive syntheses invite us to think time without a pre-existing subject (time itself) and to think difference in time without presupposed identity (difference itself).

### **1. Deleuze's reading of Kant's syntheses**

As preparatory work for the analysis of Deleuze's theory of temporal synthesis, this section sketches the implications of the *passivity* of synthesis by situating Deleuze's transcendental method in the context of the Kantian and the Post-Kantian tradition. In his attempt to redefine 'the transcendental,' Deleuze reconceives temporal synthesis as a generative movement from the unconscious, pre-individual field to individual consciousness. The section consists of the following parts: (1) A brief summary of Kant's account of synthesis, (2) Deleuze's critique of Kant, specifically of his notion of 'the transcendental' based on

Maimon's genetic method, and (3) the passive synthesis as the transcendental field of the unconscious.

Deleuze's passive synthesis of time is a reformulation of Kant's three syntheses.<sup>67 68</sup> Unlike Deleuze's synthesis, Kant's synthesis does not concern itself with the theory of time so much as with the relation among the faculties of the mind. Kant classifies the functions of the mind and attributes them to different faculties. In the process of cognition, the receptive faculty of sensibility and the spontaneous, active faculty of understanding take part. As noted in the previous chapter, Kant's theory of the faculties led him to the difficulties in explaining how the faculties that are different in nature can accord themselves with one another. Thus, for Kant, a synthesis that fills in the gaps between the two disparate faculties – sensibility and understanding – was necessary. He assigns the act of synthesis to the third faculty – imagination – that can mediate between the two and has the ability to represent objects when they no longer appear to us. The three syntheses concern how the faculties of sense, imagination, and understanding work harmoniously so that the sensible manifold is unified under the *a priori* forms of experience in the subject.

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<sup>67</sup> For similar readings of Deleuze's synthesis as a reworking of Kantian syntheses, see Henri Somers-Hall, *Deleuze's Difference and Repetition: An Edinburgh Philosophical Guide* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013); Joe Hughes, *Deleuze's 'Difference and Repetition': A Reader's Guide* (London and New York: Continuum, 2009); Daniel Smith, "Analytics: On the Becoming of Concepts," in *Essays on Deleuze* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), 122-145.

<sup>68</sup> It is quite obvious that Deleuze borrows the term 'passive synthesis' from Edmund Husserl. He mentions the Husserlian terminology of 'retention' in *Difference and Repetition* (DR 71, 73 and 80), and yet he curiously does not engage actively with Husserl – but makes explicit references to Hume, Bergson and Nietzsche – in his account of passive synthesis. My discussion of Deleuze's transcendental method in this chapter is limited to his engagement with Kant and Maimon, however, it has to be noted that the problem of genesis that shapes his transcendental philosophy was central in the Husserl scholarship in France; see commentaries on genetic phenomenology, for example, Derrida's *Le problème de la genèse dans la philosophie de Husserl* (Paris: PUF, 1954 and 1990), and Gerard Granel's *Le sens du temps et de la perception chez E. Husserl* (Paris: Gallimard, 1968). For a comparative discussion of Husserl's and Deleuze's passive syntheses in this regard, see Turetzky's "The Passive Syntheses of Time," in *Cosmological and Psychological Time*, edit. Yuval Dolev and Michael Roubach (Springer, 2016), 177-202.



For Deleuze, Kant was innovative in defining the sensibility as an independent faculty from the understanding and showing that there is something that can only be grasped by sensibility. However, Kant was limited in thinking of sensibility merely as receptivity and failed to see the possibility of synthesis on the sensibility level. Deleuze will claim therefore that Kant, in order to secure the possibility of knowledge, presupposed harmony among faculties based on the legislating faculty, the understanding, without elaborating how the synthesis occurs. Each one of Deleuze's *passive* syntheses describes a condition under which the three stages of Kant's *active* synthesis occur. If Kant's first two syntheses are grounded by the unity of transcendental apperception, for Deleuze the third synthesis results in a 'fracture' of the I rather than the unity; the unity of the consciousness in Kant is replaced by the 'dissolved I.' In Deleuze the unity is not presupposed but considered as derived from the multiple, unconscious, 'larval' selves: "It is these three syntheses which must be understood as constitutive of the unconscious" (DR 114/150).<sup>69</sup>

### The synthesis in Kant

Kant talks about a threefold synthesis in the 'Transcendental Deduction'<sup>70</sup>: synthesis of **apprehension** in the intuition, of **reproduction** in the imagination, and of **recognition** in the concept (CPR, A97-105). Each of them corresponds to the faculties of sense, imagination and understanding. All of these faculties have an empirical employment as well

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<sup>69</sup> For a more detailed discussion on Deleuze's treatment of 'larval subjects' and organic synthesis, see John Protevi, "Larval Subjects, Autonomous Systems and *E. Coli* Chemotaxis," *Deleuze and the Body*, edited by Laura Guillaume and Joe Hughes (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011), 29-52.

<sup>70</sup> Kant's deduction, where the account of three syntheses is given, examines whether the application of concepts to objects can be justified. According to Kant, deduction is not required for the pure forms of intuition but for the use of categories as the pure concepts of the understanding. We do not need to examine the legitimacy of the former since there are no manifolds that are not given through space and time. But that the phenomena are necessarily subject to the concepts needed to be justified. For Kant, synthesis proves that the categories by which manifolds are synthesized have not only a subjective necessity – custom, as Hume argued – but also objective validity.

as a transcendental one. The transcendental employment of faculties concerns *a priori* (pure) forms of intuition and concepts that are independent of empirical contents of experience. For instance, empirical imagination brings empirical diversity to recognition and transcendental imagination subsumes pure intuition under the unity of apperception. Kant talks about the three sources of the mind that contain the conditions of the possibility of all experience: sense, imagination, and apperception. According to Kant,

On these are grounded 1) the **synopsis** of the manifold a priori through sense; 2) the **synthesis** of the manifold through the imagination; finally 3) the **unity** of this synthesis through original apperception (CPR, A94).

By apprehension, we locate the manifold in a certain time and space. Kant says the manifolds would not be represented (contained in one representation) unless we distinguish the time in the succession of impressions (CPR, A99). Reproduction concerns retaining former representations that are accompanied one another so that the mind will transition from one to the other even when the object is not present. The synthesis of reproduction is performed by the transcendental faculty of the imagination. However, according to Kant, we would not be able to unify the manifold without the form of recognition. For Kant, appearances themselves are not objects. What enables us to see them as an object of representations is the form, 'something in general =X.' Kant says it can be nothing other than "the formal unity of the consciousness," or the unity of apperception that gives our cognitions the unity that constitutes the concept of an object (CPR, A105).

Kant says that these syntheses are not only of the contents of an empirical condition but also a transcendental one: *a priori* synthesis concerns the *a priori* forms of intuition (space and time themselves) and of the understanding (categories), whereas the empirical synthesis regards the empirical contents of those forms that are subsumed under the unity of

apperception (question of how an object is constituted). For example, empirical apprehension in intuition gives the diversity in space and time (and diversity of space and time themselves) a form of the determinable by placing it in specific space and time.

Kant defines synthesis as “the act of putting different representations together, and of grasping what is manifold in them in one act of knowledge” (CPR, A77/B109). According to Kant, we are hardly conscious of this function of synthesis. It is “a blind but indispensable function of the soul”(CPR, A78/B103). However, since the synthesis is an activity that requires more than receptivity, Kant thinks that it cannot be performed by sensibility; if sensibility could perform a synthesis then what is given to it would be already given as synthesized. Thus he attributes the activity of apprehension and reproduction to the *imagination*. In the first Critique, the imagination plays a mediating role between sensibility and understanding. First, in the Deduction, it relates phenomena (the diversity in space and time) to the understanding and space and time themselves to the categories by transcendental synthesis. The imagination performs the synthesis under the legislating faculty, the understanding. Second, the imagination schematizes. Schema is a “third thing, which is homogeneous on the one hand with the category, and on the other hand with the appearance” (CPR, A173/ B176). If synthesis is the determination of a certain space and time in conformity with the categories, the schema is “a spatio-temporal determination which itself corresponds to the category, everywhere and at all times” (PCK 18/28). The imagination’s schematization presupposes the synthesis. Schema concerns how the understanding applies to the phenomena that are already subject to it by the synthesis.

## Deleuze's critique of Kant's synthesis

But according to Deleuze, Kant's attempt to solve the problem of duality between the sensibility and understanding through synthesis is unsuccessful. Kant locates synthesis in the imagination, but the imagination synthesizes only under the legislation of the understanding. He does not explain *how* the imagination can be subjected to the understanding. Understanding, the legislating faculty is what enables Kant to go beyond the empirical association that Hume attributes to the principle of human nature. However, Deleuze claims that Kant simply presupposes the harmony among the two disparate faculties, rather than showing how it is generated. In his remarks on schematism Deleuze says,

It [schema] brings spatio-temporal relations into correspondence with the logical relations of the concept. However, since it remains external to the concept, it is not clear how it can ensure the harmony of the understanding and sensibility, since it does not even have the means to ensure its own harmony with the understanding without appeal to a miracle (DR 218/281).

Deleuze claims that Kant did not successfully show in the first Critique how the imagination can mediate the sensibility and the understanding despite being external to concepts.<sup>71</sup> In his critique of what he calls 'the model of recognition,' Deleuze points out that common sense as a *concordia facultatum* – the harmonious exercise of all the faculties – is presupposed in Kant's syntheses.

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<sup>71</sup> In his book on Kant, Deleuze raises the same problem: "The fact that spatio-temporal relations can be adequate to conceptual relations (in spite of their difference in nature) is, Kant says, a deep mystery and a hidden art" (PCK 18/29); see also Immanuel Kant, letter to Marcus Herz, 26 May 1789, in *Immanuel Kant: Philosophical Correspondence, 1759-99*, ed. Arnulf Zweig (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967), 150-156.) But Deleuze also finds the answer in Kant, in the role of imagination in the Third Critique. He argues, in the account of the Sublime where the imagination is not subordinated to the understanding, the accord among all the faculties is genuinely engendered in the form of 'free play,' rather than simply assumed (PCK 51/75). Deleuze writes, "Kant was the first to provide the example of such a discordant harmony, the relation between imagination and thought which occurs in the case of the sublime" (DR 146/190). See also "The Idea of Genesis in Kant's Esthetics" in *Desert Islands and Other Texts (1953-1974)*, edit. David Lapoujade, trans. Michael Tormina (New York: Semiotext(e), 2004), 56-71.

In the first edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason* he [Kant] describes in detail three syntheses which measure the respective contributions of the thinking faculties, all culminating in the third, that of recognition, which is expressed in the form of the unspecified object as correlate of the 'I think' to which all the faculties are related. *Kant traces the so-called transcendental structures from the empirical acts of a psychological consciousness: the transcendental synthesis of apprehension is directly induced from an empirical apprehension, and so on.* In order to hide this all too obvious procedure, Kant suppressed this text in the second edition (DR 135/176, emphasis added).

For Kant, the first two syntheses are grounded by the third synthesis of recognition. Deleuze argues that Kant had to assume a Cogito that "expresses the unity of all the faculties in the subject" (DR 133/174) as a ground. This was necessary for Kant, according to Deleuze, since he conceived sensibility as a pure receptivity, deprived of the power to synthesize. Thus, the synthesis that requires activity and spontaneity had to be attributed to understanding. Kant was not unaware of the possibility of the synthesis prior to consciousness in the A edition – in apprehension and reproduction – but did not develop this insight. In the B edition he moves away from this unconscious kind of synthesis and subordinates the overall activity of synthesis to the consciousness. "For Kant as for Descartes, it is the identity of the Self in the 'I think' which grounds the harmony of all the faculties and their agreement on the form of a supposed Same object" (ibid.). Thus, Deleuze explores the possibility of the synthesis without presupposing *sens commun* or the identity of the self, by reconceiving sensibility. He thinks that the sensibility, despite its receptivity, is capable of syntheses. The self is also understood differently without the predetermined unity, as a passive self. According to Deleuze, "[t]he passive self is not defined simply by receptivity – that is, by means of the capacity to experience sensations – but by virtue of the contractile contemplation which constitutes the organism itself before it constitutes the sensations" (DR 78/107).

## Redefining the Transcendental

In the above passage, Deleuze also raises the problem of Kant's transcendental method. He calls Kant's synthesis 'active' and his reconfiguration of it 'transcendental passive.' It is important at this point to see how Deleuze modifies the Kantian distinction between the empirical and the transcendental. Generally speaking, the empirical regards the principles that are derived from our ordinary, conscious experience, whereas the transcendental concerns the conditions of the experience. 'The transcendental' is to be distinguished from 'the transcendent,' which denotes what exceeds the possibility of experience. In Kant, the transcendental as the condition for the possibility of experience is not itself an object of experience, but the *a priori* forms that make experience possible. Deleuze thinks that the transcendental condition should tell us about more than a mere possibility of experience. Deleuze's reconfiguration of the transcendental is largely based on Bergson's critique of the notion of the possible. I will elaborate further on this claim in the last section of the chapter ('3.1 The virtual as the new transcendental') after examining the notion of the virtual in Deleuze's synthesis. Here let us briefly see what Deleuze finds problematic about defining the transcendental as the condition of the *possibility* of experience. First of all, Deleuze thinks that Kant finds the transcendental condition in the empirical. As Daniel Smith notes, "Kant had assumed that there are *a priori* 'facts' of reason (knowledge, morality) and sought the condition of possibility of these facts in the transcendental,"<sup>72</sup> thus entailed a 'conformism.' To begin with the facts and derive the condition for their possibility from them is, in Bergson-Deleuzian terms, to trace the

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<sup>72</sup> Daniel W. Smith, *Essays on Deleuze* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), 238.

transcendental from the empirical, or to look for the condition in ‘the conditioned.’<sup>73</sup> If Deleuze is right, Kant is confusing the distinction of the transcendental and the empirical that he himself suggested. Another problem Deleuze sees is that conditions of possible experience are “too general or too large for the real. The net is too loose that the largest fish pass through” (DR 68/94). As Moulard-Leonard puts it, the conditions of possibility for Kant are “negative conditions of necessity” in the sense that without them there could supposedly be no meaningful experience. Deleuze wants the transcendental to be the condition of *real* experience rather than a general, abstract condition of possible experience.<sup>74</sup>

Thus Deleuze suggests, “the condition must be a condition of real experience, not of possible experience. It forms an intrinsic genesis, not an extrinsic conditioning” (DR 154/200). For Deleuze, the condition of real experience should provide a genetic account of the experience without positing any external principle, such as the transcendental unity of apperception that guarantees a *concordia facultatum*. As Joe Hughes notes, Deleuze’s account of the passive synthesis “takes up the Kantian syntheses and describes them from the point

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<sup>73</sup> The distinction between the possible and the real comes from Bergson. Deleuze says in his essay ‘Bergson,’ “What Bergson critiques in the idea of the *possible* is that it presents us a simple copy of the produce, projected or rather retrojected onto the movement of production, onto invention” (Gilles Deleuze, *Desert Islands and Other Texts (1953-1974)*, edit. David Lapoujade, trans. Michael Tormina (New York: Semiotext(e), 2004), 30). It is in “The Possible and the Real” (Henri Bergson, *The Creative Mind*, trans. Mabelle Andison (New York: Philosophical Library, 2007), 73-86) that Bergson advances a critique of ‘the possible.’ According to Bergson, we think of ‘the possible’ as something prior to the real. That is, we think that for something to be realized, it must first be possible. He gives an example a work of art that is not yet created, in the description of a conversation he once had about the future of literature during the Great War. The interlocutor asks him whether he perceives “certain possible directions” of the great dramatic work of tomorrow. Bergson responds by pointing to the fact that the work of tomorrow that is to take place is not yet possible, but when a man of talent creates the work, then and only then, it will become retrospectively possible. Upon its realization, it begins to ‘have been always possible.’ Despite the fact that the possibility is a reality of a thing retrojected onto the past, we mistakenly think that for something to be realized, it must first be possible. The possible is “the mirage of the present in the past” (82).

<sup>74</sup> Valentine Moulard-Leonard, *Bergson-Deleuze Encounters: Transcendental Experience and the Thought of the Virtual* (State University of New York Press, 2008), 170.

of view of a transcendental genesis.”<sup>75</sup> Later in the chapter, we will see how Deleuze uses the virtual-actual schema to show the transcendental genesis of time and subjectivity.

Is Deleuze’s criticism of Kant for overlooking the problem of genesis fair? It seems to me that their disagreement on the transcendental comes from the differing concepts of *experience*. For Kant, experience consists of representations unified in the consciousness, the given to the ‘I.’ Thus, the Kantian transcendental concerns the necessary condition under which the experience defined as such occurs: the condition of the possibility. For Deleuze, experience does not begin with representations and the unity of consciousness, but as the process where the representations and conscious states themselves are generated. When understood as a continuous, productive process, experience is not demarcated by ‘the given’ in the consciousness. Therefore, the transcendental for Deleuze as the condition of experience should look beyond the Kantian notion of phenomenon and the limit of consciousness. As Sauvagnargues puts it, Deleuze “releases experience from its moulding through an originary subject: experience is no longer, in the manner of phenomenology, a seizure of originary conditions of the given for consciousness.”<sup>76</sup> We will demonstrate in what follows how Deleuze develops his critique of the Kantian transcendental method based on Salomon Maimon’s genetic method, especially the generation of sensation by the unconscious synthesis.

### **Maimon: the possibility of the ‘unconscious’ synthesis**

We said that Deleuze finds Kant’s synthesis as an attempt to bridge the gap between the two faculties to be unsuccessful, because it relies on the external principle that Kant presupposes.

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<sup>75</sup> Joe Hughes, *Deleuze’s ‘Difference and Repetition’: A Reader’s Guide* (London and New York: Continuum, 2009), 90.

<sup>76</sup> Anne Sauvagnargues, “The Problematic Idea, Neo-Kantianism and Maimon’s Role in Deleuze’s Thought” in *At the Edges of Thought*, Edinburgh University, 44-59. 48.



Deleuze demands that the transcendental condition explains how the experience is generated. Before we move on to Deleuze's own account of synthesis, we need to see what it entails to analyze experience from a genetic point of view. On this point Deleuze draws on Salomon Maimon, a Post-Kantian thinker, who tries to solve the duality between the sensibility and understanding using Leibnizian differentials. His central claim is that the transcendental should be defined as a genetic condition of the experience, which involves understanding perception in terms of a synthetic relation between differential elements. The details of Maimon's argument against Kant's transcendental method, while intriguing, are not immediately relevant to our inquiry here.<sup>77</sup> Thus we will keep our focus on his account of the unconscious synthesis.

Let us first look at the notion of 'the unconscious' in Leibniz,<sup>78</sup> which Maimon's claim regarding the unconscious nature of the differentials is rooted. Leibniz distinguished the sensible and the unconscious sensibility. He acknowledged that there are latent memories that are not brought into consciousness, but later come to mind when something reminds us of them "as when hearing the opening words of a song is enough to bring back the rest"<sup>79</sup> (Leibniz 1714:208). He also distinguishes perception from apperception; apperception is consciousness, or the reflective knowledge of perception (ibid.). So, for

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<sup>77</sup> For a more detailed discussion of Maimon and Deleuze, see for example, Simon Duffy's analysis of Maimon's critique of Kant on Mathematics in *Deleuze and the History of Mathematics: In Defense of the 'New'* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2013); Anne Sauvagargues's "The Problematic Idea, Neo-Kantianism and Maimon's Role in Deleuze's Thought" in *At the Edges of Thought*, edit. by Craig Lundy and Daniella Voss (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015), 44-59; Daniela Voss's *Conditions of Thought: Deleuze and the Transcendental Conditions* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013) and "Maimon and Deleuze: the viewpoint of internal genesis and the concept of differentials" *Parrhesia* 11 (2011): 62-74. Commentaries on Maimon that Deleuze refers to in DR include Martial Guérout's book, *La philosophie transcendente de Salomon Maimon* (Paris: Alcan, 1929) and Jules Vuillemin's *L'héritage kantien et la révolution copernicienne* (Paris: PUF, 1954).

<sup>78</sup> The notion of 'the unconscious' discussed in this chapter is to be distinguished from the Freudian model of the unconscious that involves the process of repression.

<sup>79</sup> G.W.F. Leibniz, *New Essays on the Human Understanding*, trans. Peter Remnant and Jonathan Bennett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981[1714]), 52.

Leibniz, there is perception that we do not apperceive, thus is not immediately available to consciousness. In this sense we may say that Leibniz discovered ‘the unconscious.’ He explains this in terms of minute perceptions (*petites perceptions*, *perceptions insensibles*) that constitute the sensible. What is sensible in the Kantian sense is, according to Leibniz, a result of synthesis on the level of unconscious sensibility. For example, the sound of the sea is made up of minute perceptions of water drops. The feeling of hunger becomes notable when the lack of sugar reaches a certain level. Deleuze notes that for Leibniz, consciousness is not what grounds the synthesis, but it is a matter of *threshold*.<sup>80</sup> Minute or inconspicuous perceptions are not parts of conscious perception but “differentials of consciousness.”<sup>81</sup> For example, when the colors yellow and blue are blended, they enter into a reciprocal determination of differentials that produces green.

$$\frac{db}{dy} = g$$

In other words, green becomes a conscious perception when the reciprocal relationship between blue and yellow reaches a certain point. So, from the genetic point of view, perception does not presuppose an object that affects us but one that consists of the reciprocal determination of differentials. Deleuze writes that for Leibniz, “space-time ceases to be a pure given in order to become the totality or the nexus of differential relations in the subject, and the object itself ceases to be an empirical given in order to become the product of these relations in conscious perception” (ibid.). If sensibility for Kant submits to transcendental conditioning, Leibniz explains it in terms of the principle of continuity and internal genesis.

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<sup>80</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*, trans. Tom Conley (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 88.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 89.

Maimon claims that this Leibnizian method of the reciprocal determination of differentials replaces the Kantian transcendental method of conditioning. In his account of differentials, Maimon draws on Kant's *Anticipations of perception*, where Kant explains sensation in terms of intensive magnitude.<sup>82</sup> He notes that sensations such as color, light or heat spread between the lowest degree of consciousness and a fully conscious perception. Accordingly, our consciousness runs between varying degrees of sensible intuition. Maimon conceives differentials as intensive magnitude, from which extensive magnitude is generated. "For example, the different degrees of heat and cold are perceived by means of the rising and falling of a thermometer: it is given as a unity and thought as a plurality through comparison. With quanta, intensive magnitude is the differential of the extensive, and the extensive is, in turn, the integral of the intensive."<sup>83</sup> The differentials, infinitely small differences, in their reciprocal determination constitute an object of cognition with a determined magnitude. The differentials themselves are not yet given to consciousness, thus constitute the transcendental field of 'unconscious.'

Maimon calls the genetic differential elements of intuitions 'presentations (*Darstellungen*),' which the Kantian representations (*Vorstellung*) are generated from. Maimon argues that any sensible representation should be considered as a presentation: "sensible representations in themselves, considered as mere differentials, do not yet result in consciousness [...] this is not representation, i.e. a mere making present of what is not [now] present, but rather presentation, i.e. the representation of what was previously not as [now] existing."<sup>84</sup> If the re-presentation (*vor-stellung*) of an object is a copy or reproduction of the

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<sup>82</sup> Salomon Maimon, *Essay on Transcendental Philosophy*, trans. Nick Midgley, Henry Somers-Hall, Alistair Welchman, and Merten Reglitz (New York and London: Continuum, 2010), Chapter 7.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid. 69.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid. 20.

object that relates externally to its representation, presentation suggests the internal genetic process that does not presuppose the reality of the object external to it.<sup>85</sup> This refers us back to our earlier discussion of Deleuze's distinction between 'what presents itself' and 'what is represented,' as well as that between appearing (*apparition*) and appearance (*apparence*).<sup>86</sup> For Deleuze, representation implies activity and unity, whereas presentation relates to passivity and diversity.

In support of Maimon's transcendental method, Deleuze says:

Maimon's genius lies in showing how inadequate the point of view of conditioning is for a transcendental philosophy: both terms of the difference must equally be thought – in other words, determinability must itself be conceived as pointing towards a principle of reciprocal determination (DR 173/225).

According to Deleuze, his reconfiguration of Kant's transcendental method along the line of internal genesis is to pursue the initial object of Kantian synthesis. Kant's first two syntheses seem to concern the problem of genesis – how a representation of objects is generated in time. Kant posits the possibility of, what we might call, 'unconscious synthesis' when he says, "we are seldom ever conscious" (CPR, A78/B103) of the syntheses in sense and imagination. But later in the third synthesis of recognition, the question becomes why the consciousness and its unity is required for us to have representations. Kant calls the mind's consciousness of itself as the subject of its representations, 'transcendental apperception.' (CPR, A106-108) The transcendental apperception that ties appearances together as one experience is a ground of the syntheses as well as of subjectivity. Without it, representations would not be the representations of a thing, or *my* representations. Kant claims that this numerical unity is not given empirically, but has to be there prior to any experience.

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<sup>85</sup> For a more detailed discussion on 'presentation' in Maimon, see Samuel Atlas, *From Critical to Speculative Idealism: The Philosophy of Solomon Maimon* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1964), especially Chapter IV.

<sup>86</sup> See Chapter I, 3.3 'Time as an empty form'

Deleuze wants to complete Kant's unfinished investigation by revisiting the problem of the genesis. He thinks that the transcendental as a genetic account should not presuppose the unity but explain how it is produced. He believes that the syntheses can be rewritten without assuming the unity of consciousness as the transcendental ground of subjectivity. Thus, for Deleuze, the synthesis concerns not only how representations are generated but also how the subjectivity is produced in time.

Let us remember that Deleuze finds the subject's passive relation to time in his comparison between the Kantian and the Cartesian ego. In Kant, the 'I think' determines the undetermined existence 'I am,' but only under the form through which the latter becomes determinable – the form of time. Deleuze sees the third term determinable as the passive self (what Kant calls the receptivity of intuition). This passive subject, however, is not a pure receptivity as Kant described. According to Deleuze, Kant understood this passive self as mere receptivity, and thus he had to posit a new form of active synthetic identity by resurrecting 'the I': "It is impossible to maintain the Kantian distribution [...] here, synthesis is understood as active and as giving rise to a new form of identity in the I, while passivity is understood as simple receptivity without synthesis" (DR 87/118). Deleuze will argue that the synthesis occurs before any conscious activity intervenes. He calls this a *passive* synthesis of time.

### **Passivity of the synthesis: Transcendental-unconscious subject**

Since Deleuze wants to explain the condition of experience without the presumed subsumption of sensibility under the faculty of understanding, he will seek to show that the sensibility itself has a power of synthesis and thus synthesis is a generative movement from sense to thought. As the *a priori* forms of sensibility in Kant are space and time, Deleuze also

discusses the synthesis of the sensible in two different ways. We said earlier that in Maimon's Leibnizian reading of Kant, time and space are not a pure given, but a synthesis or a binding together of differential relations that constitutes the subject and the object. Drawing on this point, Deleuze demonstrates the generation of the space as the form of outer sense and of the object with his account of the synthesis of differential elements that he calls *intensities*. To explain the production of the subject and of time as the form of inner sense, Deleuze presents 'the passive syntheses of time' that describes the way the passive self is affected by time and constitutes subjectivity. Unlike his theory of intensity that is generally received as an account for the production of objects in space, Deleuze's passive synthesis of time is not widely appreciated as a theory of the production of the subject. In the next section, I wish to demonstrate the ways in which such a reading is justified.

Before we move on, it is perhaps helpful to see how Deleuze's reworking of the transcendental method is related to his notion of time as self-differentiation that we have seen in the previous chapter. We said that Deleuze draws the definition of time as differentiation by creatively combining Bergson's duration as 'that which differs from itself' and Kant's notion of time as auto-affection. In his appropriation of the transcendental as well, Deleuze brings in Bergson's idea of the virtual, which he believes to be a conceptual framework for the time of the unconscious.

Like Bergson, Deleuze believes that our experience is what is filtered through our consciousness that tends toward practical needs. We perceive things not by adding parts but by subtracting from the whole what does not meet our needs. What is given to us is given as limited or even altered by the tendency of human understanding, for example, the need for action and reaction leads us to see things as substances that remain unchanged throughout

time. It is also necessary to attribute identity to the subjects as agents of action. In our ordinary experience, we do not question the unity of the subject, or that of the ‘things’ that are presented to us as objects.

In order to complement the time of consciousness that is centered on the present, Deleuze turns to Bergson’s peculiar theory of memory, which affirms the virtual existence of the past in the present. He finds it convincing to posit different coexisting levels of time as a transcendental condition for the present. To put it in other words, time can be effectively seen as a co-determining structure between the time of the actual, consciousness and the time of the virtual, unconscious time.<sup>87</sup> When Deleuze writes “[d]ifferentiation is the movement of a virtuality actualizing itself,” (BCD 40/55-56) he is introducing his project of transforming Bergson’s theory of the virtual into a transcendental account of time: articulating the time of the unconscious.

## **2. The Passive Syntheses of Time: The Formation of the Subject**

### **2.1 Time and Subjectification: Memory as Auto-affection**

“[T]he subject, at root, is the synthesis of time.”<sup>88</sup>

We have seen that Deleuze’s passive synthesis of time is to provide an explanation for how Kant’s active syntheses are generated. This task involves reconstructing Kant’s notion of ‘the transcendental.’ With Deleuze, the Kantian transcendental-empirical scheme is recast as the virtual-actual distinction. Since our focus here is the relation between time

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<sup>87</sup> Bergson, in the early works, limits duration to consciousness in distinguishing it from the material objects. However his later theory of memory develops the workings of our mind that cannot be identified with consciousness. It is for this reason that Deleuze says Bergson’s theory of memory is more essential than that of duration.

<sup>88</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Empiricism and Subjectivity: An Essay on Hume's Theory of Human Nature*. trans. Constantin V. Boundas (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 93.

and the subject formation, our discussion of Deleuze's synthesis of time will be centered on how the virtual-actual scheme structures the relation between the present, the past and the future.

Many readers of Deleuze have approached the passive synthesis from the point of view of genesis, specifically, as a movement from sensibility to the production of thought (dynamic genesis). Joe Hughes says that the passive synthesis is "Deleuze's account of the dynamic genesis," which he defines as a process that "begins in sensibility and sets of the 'explosive' line of the faculties as it travels from the imagination to memory to thought."<sup>89</sup> Another key commentator of *Difference and Repetition*, Henri Somers-Hall reads Deleuze's passive synthesis as an account of "the organization of experience which does not rely on the activity of a subject." Framing the problem in this way, he raises the question of "explaining how subjects come into being," however, his primary focus seems to be showing Deleuze's synthesis as an alternative to the Kantian notion of synthesis.<sup>90</sup> Others treated Deleuze's analysis as a theory of time; Jay Lampert analyzes Deleuze's arguments in terms of 'logics of time' corresponding to different temporal modalities such as succession, coexistence and simultaneity, and how these logics apply to historical events and to the idea of history itself.<sup>91</sup> James Williams characterizes Deleuze's idea of time as "a genuine multiple philosophy of time" and emphasizes the "irreducible multiplicity of dimensions" of time as the result of syntheses.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Joe Hughes, *Deleuze's 'Difference and Repetition': A Reader's Guide* (London and New York: Continuum, 2009), 86.

<sup>90</sup> Henri Somers-Hall, *Deleuze's Difference and Repetition: An Edinburgh Philosophical Guide* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), 56-57.

<sup>91</sup> Jay Lampert, *Deleuze and Guattari's Philosophy of History* (London and New York: Continuum, 2006)

<sup>92</sup> James Williams, *Gilles Deleuze's Philosophy of Time* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011), 10.



My reading differs from those listed above; I treat Deleuze's passive synthesis as an account for the production of the subject. I claim that it provides an ontological ground for his theory of subjectification that he develops throughout his oeuvre, independently and together with Guattari. As a preparation for the discussions to follow on the subject formation through socio-economic temporalities (Chapters III & IV), our analysis of the passive synthesis here centers on establishing time as a structure of subjectivity. The key notion will be that of 'Memory,' through which Deleuze defines the virtual and puts together time and subjectification explicitly. Therefore I will restructure the three syntheses around the notion of memory – habit-memory, recollection-memory and transcendental memory (Forgetting).

As we have seen in the previous chapter, Deleuze defines time as self-differentiation and relates it with Kant's auto-affection, thus rendering the subject passive in relation to time. Here we will see more closely how Deleuze develops Kant's notion of auto-affection as a model of subject formation. In his book on Foucault where he raises the problem of subjectification,<sup>93</sup> Deleuze claims that Kant's paradox of inner sense reveals the temporal structure of subjectivity.

Memory is the real name of the relation to oneself, or the affection on self by self. According to Kant, time was the form in which the mind affected itself, just as space was the form in which the mind was affected by something else: time was therefore 'auto-affection' and made up the essential structure of subjectivity. But *time as subject, or rather subjectification, is called memory* (F 107/115, emphasis added, translation modified).

Here Deleuze argues that (1) time understood as an auto-affection forms the structure of subjectivity and that (2) the form of time involved in subjectification is memory. On the first

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<sup>93</sup> 'Subjectification' is a translation of the French term, *subjectivation*. This is to be distinguished from 'subjection,' which translates *assujettissement*. I discuss this distinction in detail in the section 'The Problem of Subjectification in Deleuze' in Chapter IV.

point, he does not mention it explicitly in the text, but he is referring to Heidegger's reading of Kant,<sup>94</sup> which we cannot discuss here in full; In *Kant and the problem of metaphysics*, Heidegger says "time as pure self-affection forms the essential structure of subjectivity."<sup>95</sup> He notes that time is "in the subject" does not simply mean the subjective character of time, but the very temporal character of the self.<sup>96</sup> In Kant, as pure self-affection, time concerns the mode in which the mind is affected through its own activity. Time enables the mind to be what it is, thus forms the basis of selfhood. The self is not given, but constituted through and only through time. The subject is no other than the self that is able to affect itself.<sup>97</sup> Thus Heidegger writes, "Time and the 'I think' are no longer opposed to one another as unlike and incompatible; they are the same."<sup>98</sup>

If Heidegger highlights the temporal character of transcendental apperception, Deleuze focuses more on articulating a structure of time under which the subject is constituted, which results not in the unity, but the *fracture* in 'the I.' He wants to show what we might call a *reversal* of time and the subject: it is not that time is in us but we are in time. According to the second point Deleuze is making here, we should turn to the notion of *memory* in order to understand this reversal. Deleuze's account of memory relies much on Bergson's theory of pure past, but only combined with the Nietzschean concept of

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<sup>94</sup> In *Foucault*, Deleuze says that Foucault reads Nietzsche through Heidegger, in that he starts to rethink 'the outside' in terms of temporality rather than spatiality toward the end of his career (Gilles Deleuze, *Foucault*, trans. Sean Hand (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1986)). According to Deleuze, Foucault's interest in the problem of subjectification and time was developed from Heidegger's reading of Kant. See Foucault, 'Le retour de la morale' (entretien avec G. Barnbedette et A. Scala, 29 mai 1984), *Les Nouvelles littéraires*, no. 2937, 28 juin 1984, 36-41.

<sup>95</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, trans. James S. Churchill (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1962), 194.

<sup>96</sup> Heidegger, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, 193-197.

<sup>97</sup> In Chapter I, Section 4.2, I discussed 'auto-affection' in terms of the activity of thinking turned inward, where we observe the split between the active thinking I and the passive self as an object of thought. I provide an extensive analysis on this split, or the 'doubling' of the subject in Chapter IV, Section 1.1.

<sup>98</sup> Heidegger, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, 197.

Forgetting. As we will see below, these figures – Bergson and Nietzsche – provide crucial inspiration for Deleuze’s three passive syntheses. In terms of the relation between subjectivity and memory, the first two syntheses will bear on the two aspects of memory, which Deleuze defines as a ‘line of subjectivity’ in *Bergsonism*: contraction-subjectivity and recollection-subjectivity. The third synthesis reveals the power of forgetting within memory, using Nietzsche’s eternal return as a model. So, in the following I will show how the passive syntheses produce subjectivity, as they constitute present, past and future in time. I will focus on the role of memory – and forgetting – to highlight how time as auto-affection forms the structure of subjectivity.

## **2.2 The first synthesis of habit: originary subjectivity**

In the three syntheses that correspond to the present, past and future, he shows that the operation of repetition constitutes time as well as the subject. In the first synthesis, we see how time is constituted as the present, of which the past and the future are said to be only dimensions. The second synthesis shows how the present and the future can be considered as a result of the synthesis of pure Memory, or what he calls the ‘Being of the past.’ In this sense, it can be argued that each one of the three syntheses seems to present an account of time independently from one another. However, there is also a sense in which they constitute one structure of time as a whole, in which they play different specific roles. When we get to the third synthesis, Deleuze says that the first synthesis is the foundation (*fondation*) of time, the second, the ground (*fondement*) of time and the third, the ‘ungrounding (*effondement*)’ of time (DR 91/123). I am more interested in showing the latter, the relation between the three temporal dimensions that the three syntheses reveal, as well as its implications for the production of subjectivity.

The first synthesis of the present seems to accomplish two things: On the one hand, it explains how the active synthesis of apprehension in Kant is generated. Unlike Kant who subordinates the imagination as a faculty of synthesis to the legislation of the understanding, Deleuze portrays the synthesis as a spontaneous operation of what he calls ‘vital primary sensibility,’ from which both sensations (subjective) and qualities (objective) are produced. On the other hand, the first synthesis demonstrates how the subject can be understood as a product of temporal synthesis. Deleuze describes a preliminary form of subjectivity as the pre-individual ‘egos’ that respond to the surroundings, the yet-to-be objects. I hope to clarify in the following these ideas that constitute Deleuze’s version of the transcendental field.

### **Contraction as impersonal memory**

In the first synthesis, Deleuze claims that there is an operation that occurs in the imagination prior to any sort of active reflection or memory, which he calls “contraction.” Deleuze uses this Bergsonian term<sup>99</sup> to refer to the psychological formation of a ‘case’ in our imagination as well as the organic formation of the body through the contraction of elements.<sup>100</sup> According to Deleuze, a succession of instants is not enough to constitute the temporal dimension of the present; there has to be something that is prolonged in the succession of passing instants and there has to be an activity of retaining one instant when another appears (DR 70-71/97). Deleuze says that it is the imagination as a *contractile* power that synthesizes two independent instants into one another. As Joe Hughes also points out, Deleuze’s claim that a succession of instants cannot form time echoes Bergson’s notion of

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<sup>99</sup> The term ‘contraction’ comes from Bergson’s theory of memory, which we will return to in the next section on the second synthesis. In his reading of Bergson, Deleuze contrasts ‘contraction’ with pure repetition of matter, where we find only discontinuous moments that are external to one another (BCD 45).

<sup>100</sup> Eugene B. Young et al. *The Deleuze and Guattari Dictionary* (Norfolk: Bloomsbury, 2013), 73; for the contraction on an organic level, Deleuze talks about contraction in terms of need, desire and fatigue in the section on the first synthesis, which we do not discuss in depth here.

elementary memory<sup>101</sup> – that time cannot be produced without memory that connects two instants. Contraction in the first synthesis can be seen as ‘an impersonal memory’ in that it gathers successive moments together.

Deleuze claims that it is through this contraction that we form habit, by drawing a *relation* between successive instants: “In essence, habit is contraction” (DR 73/101). Contraction as habit is not what is opposed to dilation or relaxation. This process of habituation involves repetition obviously, but also an act of “drawing off something new” from repetition. For example, when A-B-A-B-A... occurs, the mind retains something from the passing instants of A-B and anticipates that B will appear after A. That is, the mind expects that the case AB would perpetuate. Here the mind draws a *relation* that is not found in the terms A and B themselves, but external to them. Hence Deleuze says “[r]epetition changes nothing in the object repeated, but does change something in the mind which contemplates it” (DR 70/96). Strictly speaking, if there are only the alternating cases (or types) of A and B without that which contemplates it, we would not be able to call it a repetition since it would simply be an instantaneous appearance of a discrete element that disappears before the other appears: *for whom* would it be a repetition? So, we should say that we could speak properly of repetition only *in relation to* the mind that contemplates on the change and difference. Although we cannot yet properly speak of the object-subject distinction since it is the production of the subject that Deleuze’s synthesis is trying to capture, but the emergence of contemplating minds on the status of matter as *mens momentanea* marks the preliminary relation between the two.

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<sup>101</sup> Joe Hughes, *Deleuze’s ‘Difference and Repetition’: A Reader’s Guide* (London and New York: Continuum, 2009), 131.

Let us then consider where the contemplating mind stands in relation to matter and empirical subjectivity. Deleuze seems to talk about the distinction in terms of three levels of repetition: repetition in-itself, repetition for-itself and repetition for us.

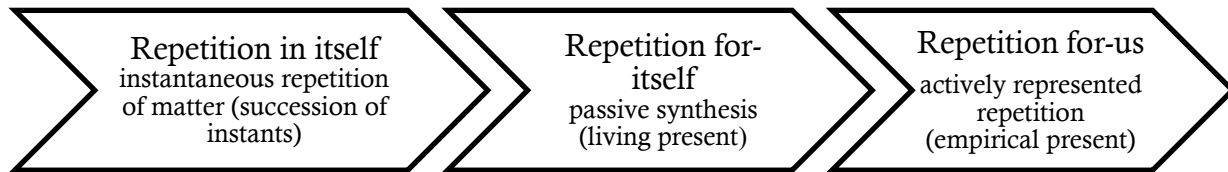


Table 2. Levels of Repetition

The first one concerns the status of matter or, as seen above, the cases that appear momentarily without an observer. It is a repetition of matter in itself, not in relation to anything. There is nothing that endures on this level, but only a succession of instants that marks an “aborted moment of the birth” of time in Deleuze’s term. It is not until the third moment that we have an empirical subject and the present as an actively represented repetition. This is the empirical present that we are conscious of. The passive synthesis we are dealing with in this section is an intermediary between these two. It constitutes a preliminary distinction between matter and the activity of contraction. The imagination as a contractile power or a contemplative mind synthesizes discontinuous instants by drawing a relation between them. It is a pre-reflective activity that occurs *in* the mind, not *by* the mind. Deleuze writes, “from the instantaneous repetition which unravels itself to the actively represented repetition through the intermediary of passive synthesis” (DR 76/103-104). He gives an example of a chicken that pecks grain. What we see as pecks in the perceptual synthesis is comprised of cardiac pulsations in an organic synthesis that leads to a nodding of the chicken’s head. The organism draws something different in its body through repeated

pulsations. The point at which the pre-reflective mind can no longer contract is marked by *fatigue*.

### **Habit as bodily memory**

What does this passive synthesis have to do with subjectivity? According to Deleuze, as the living present is constituted in time, an “originary subjectivity” emerges. Deleuze defines the self – or any organism – in terms of habit. For Deleuze, an active subject is made up of the selves that are themselves contraction and contemplation (contractile contemplation): “Underneath the self which acts are little selves which contemplate and which render possible both the action and the active subject” (DR 75/103). He first defines the originary subjectivity as a ‘vital primary sensibility.’ It is a sensibility that does not belong to an active subject, prior to recognition, representation, and even prior to sensations that we normally attribute to an active subject. Here he is suggesting that we think of synthesis not only as a perceptual process but also as an organic synthesis. Later in the text Deleuze gives an example of an eye. “The eye binds light, it is itself a bound light” (DR 96/128). An organism develops a habit of seeing as it adapts itself to the light stimuli. As Malabou notes, the eye is produced by the material it contracts.<sup>102</sup> So, contraction is both action and reaction. The organism can develop sight only by being exposed to light, but at the same time it should be able to actively respond to the stimuli in determining how the stimuli would be reproduced on a particular part of its body. It is passive in relation to an empirical subject of representation, but active in relation to matter. Deleuze says that this primary sensibility is a constituent passivity that makes up the system of “dissolved selves”

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<sup>102</sup> Catherine Malabou, *The Future of Hegel: Plasticity, Temporality, and Dialectic*, trans. Lisabeth During (New York: Routledge, 2005), 61.

or “larval subjects” (DR 78/107). As the eyes themselves are contracted matter, it is not that the selves contemplate themselves but they *are* contemplations.<sup>103</sup>

Let us return to the problem of memory. The synthesis of habit in imagination produces a living present or the present in general in time. Deleuze notes that this grounds empirical memory as the activity of imagination: “[T]he active syntheses of memory and understanding are superimposed upon and supported by the passive synthesis of the imagination” (DR 71/98). We saw in Kant’s synthesis memory is understood as reproduction performed by imagination as an ability to produce the image of the objects of past perception when they are no longer present. But for Deleuze, reproduction as an activity of imagination is an *active* synthesis of memory and thus is to be grounded by the passive synthesis.

Deleuze does not say this explicitly, but I claim that the relation between the synthesis of habit and that of memory cannot be adequately understood without reference to Bergson’s distinction between two forms of memory: habit-memory and recollection-memory (or pure memory). Habit-memory is an automatic action to the environment acquired by repetition. It concerns a pattern of bodily actions in the sensory-motor mechanism. Habit is what enables us to recognize the object that we encountered before without having to seek consciously the past perception of it. Here is Bergson’s example: When we try to learn a lesson by heart, we need to decompose and recompose its parts and repeat the same effort. Like other habitual bodily exercise, the lesson is stored in a mechanism so that the beginning of the lesson would automatically trigger the memory of

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<sup>103</sup> In the first passive synthesis of habit that precedes the subject-object distinction, the relations between contractions are called signs—contractions referring to one another (DR 77/106). Deleuze develops the idea of ‘sign’ further in Chapter 3 of *Difference and Repetition* in terms of ‘the object of encounter,’ which we examine in the following section, 2.3. He also develops a more comprehensive theory of signs in his book, *Proust and Signs* (University of Minnesota Press, 2000), where he reads Proust’s novel using four types of signs.



the entire lesson. This is a kind of memory that can be brought to the present at any moment, as an automatic reaction to external stimuli or to a present perception.

Recollection-memory is different altogether. According to Bergson, it is like an event in our life. It is a memory of something that bears a date and a place and thus “unable to occur again.”<sup>104</sup> Bergson describes “the radical difference between that which must be built up by repetition and that which is essentially incapable of being repeated.”<sup>105</sup> Habit-memory serves a practical purpose and proves its utility by its being in the present, or more precisely, in the present *action*. On the contrary, in order to access a recollection-memory we have to “withdraw ourselves from the action of the moment, we must have the power to value the useless” (ibid.). Thus habit-memory relates to bodily perception and recollection memory to pure memory (‘memory par excellence’). We will return to this notion of pure memory in the section on the second synthesis.

Habit-memory makes the originary subjectivity Deleuze mentioned earlier more clear. In *Bergsonism*, Deleuze discusses ‘contraction-subjectivity (*la subjectivité-contraction*)’ as one of the two aspects of memory that signify subjectivity: the body of an organism becoming more than an instant in time, but contrive a contraction of the experienced excitations (B 53/47). We may say that the repetition of an organism’s response to the external stimuli forms the time of the present, as well as a preliminary subjectivity as a pattern of habituated response.

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<sup>104</sup> Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, trans. Nancy M. Paul and W. Scott Palmer (New York: Zone Books, 1991), 80.

<sup>105</sup> Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, 83.

## Transition to the second synthesis

The contraction-subjectivity is, however, only one of the two aspects of memory as the province of the line of subjectivity (ibid.). We have yet to look at ‘recollection-subjectivity’ that Deleuze introduces in the second synthesis of the past. According to Deleuze, memory in the active synthesis depends on both the first and the second passive synthesis: “The passive synthesis of habit constituted time as a *contraction* of instants with respect to a present, but the active synthesis of memory constitutes it as the *embedding* (*emboîtement*) of presents themselves. [...] the active synthesis of memory may well be founded upon the (empirical) passive synthesis of habit, but on the other hand it can be founded only by another (transcendental) passive synthesis which is peculiar to memory itself” (DR 81/110, translation modified). The first synthesis concerns contraction on the level of matter and body as a habituated response to the environment. It shows the emergence of elementary subjectivity as a ‘presentized’ bodily memory. The synthesis of habit is ‘*empirical* passive’ in that, when seen from a conscious subject, it operates in the present action, but its operation is almost automatic and thus is not always represented to our consciousness. The synthesis of memory that we will discuss below is considered to be *transcendental* passive, in the sense that it deals with the kind of memory that is not brought to our present action or consciousness without changing its nature.

### 2.3 Second synthesis of memory: Bergson’s pure past – the unconscious

We have seen that the passive synthesis of habit produces an elementary subjectivity as well as the present in time by contracting the moments that would otherwise disappear instantaneously. In the second synthesis, we will see that the contraction in the present is a manifestation or an aspect of another contraction on a deeper level. So contraction takes on

a different meaning, as the synthesis reveals a new way to understand the relation between the present and the past. Deleuze calls the first synthesis a foundation of time and the second, a ground of time: “Habit is the originary synthesis of time, which constitutes the life of the passing present; memory is the fundamental synthesis of time which constitutes the being of the past” (DR 80/109).

### **Memory as the ‘being of the past’**

The second synthesis that deals more directly with the auto-affection of Memory as subjectification is, according to Deleuze, necessary for the structure of time itself. The second synthesis concerns the possibility of the past in general rather than particular moments in the past.<sup>106</sup> As we will see below, Deleuze’s idea of the past is larger than what was once present, and his notion of Memory is more than what we remember: There is a kind of memory that we are not conscious of, and this necessitates positing a kind of past that exists outside of the limit of our consciousness. Deleuze calls this kind of the past, where unconscious memory is conserved, ‘the *being* of the past.’ The term gives the past an ontological status and distinguishes it from our psychological experience of the past – we tend to think that time is a succession of presents and that the past is formed after the present, as it fades away. Deleuze claims that such understanding of the past is limited when it comes to the problem of the passage of time. How does the present moment pass and become past? Is it a new present that forces the actual present to pass? Deleuze says that the present would never pass if it has to wait for a new present to come. For the present moment to pass, it has to be past at the same time as it is present (DR 80-81/109-110).

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<sup>106</sup> The distinction between the past in general and the particular moments in the past are related to that between ‘memory-image’ and ‘*pure-memory*.’ The former is a mental representation of what used to be present and the latter is an event we experienced but are no longer aware of; see also Jay Lampert’s *Simultaneity and Delay: a Dialectical Theory of Staggered Time* (New York: Continuum, 2012), 137-147.

Following Bergson, Deleuze holds a seemingly counterintuitive claim that the past and the present coexist. He reconstitutes Bergson's argument as the paradoxes of the past. The first paradox is that the past is contemporaneous with the present. The past would not be constituted unless it constitutes itself at the same time as it is present. From this, it follows that since each past is contemporaneous with the present, all past is coexistent with the present.

If the entire past coexists with the present, what differentiates the present from the past? Both Bergson and Deleuze claim that there is a difference *in kind* – rather than a difference in degree – between the present and the past; it is not that the past is a weak copy of the present, but they differ from each other in their modes of being. In *Bergsonism*, Deleuze defines the relationship between the present and the past:

The present is not; rather, it is pure becoming, always outside itself. It *is* not, but it acts. Its proper element is not being but the active or the useful. The past, on the other hand, has ceased to act or to be useful. But it has not ceased to be. Useless and inactive, impassive, it IS, in the full sense of the word (B 55/49-50).

Hence, the *being* of the past. The past does not cease to exist, but it only ceases to be in the present. As we have seen above in the distinction between habit-memory and recollection-memory, the present is constituted by practical needs. The past is not active in the present yet it is conserved in its own way. We will see how the past can *be* contemporaneous with the present without being in the present in the virtual-actual schema.

Let us look more closely at the relationship between the present and the past, using Bergson's famous diagram of the inverted cone. For Bergson, the present and the past as dimensions of time are each represented as perception and memory in our temporal life. Perception is my body's response to the objects and the environment surrounding it, thus it is based on the practical need for (re)action. However, memory does not relate to the

immediate bodily need and for this reason it is not always present in the consciousness: it is not 'useful.' It is in the background and brought to attention when called for. Memory does not exist, but *subsists*. Bergson calls this mode of being 'the virtual' as opposed to the actuality of body and perception.

The actual and the virtual differ in nature, but this does not mean that they do not interact. As we know from experience, perception and memory cannot be separated. For our bodily response to the surroundings, the recognition of objects is necessary. To recognize an object, we seem to use our recollections from past perceptions almost automatically. Thus, we may say memory is always in operation when we perceive things. In the same way, we cannot form a memory without being able to perceive. Perception not only adds something new to memory, but also modifies the pre-existing memory. Bergson explains this relationship between perception and memory or that of the actual and the virtual through the famous diagram of the inverted cone.

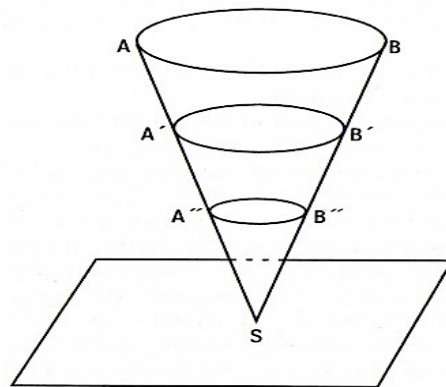


Figure 5. Bergson's inverted cone of memory

The cone SAB represents the totality of the stored memory. The summit S indicates the present, where my body as a center of action is located. My body as a 'system of sensation and movements,' is like a hole in the continuity of things in that it "holds back everything

that interests it about the object, letting the rest go by” (B 52/46).<sup>107</sup> The body’s reaction to the object is determined by perception. At the two ends of the cone are found pure perception (the summit) and pure memory (the base), which are supposed only as hypothetical ideas; pure memory at the base AB is not related to the body or to perception, whereas pure perception is not shadowed by memory. But actual perception or memory happens between these two ends, by the constant movement of the cone as a whole contracting itself to the point S. In the formation of perception and memory, two kinds of movement occur; one is a descending movement of the virtual memories in the cone to the point S, which produces perception as a result. As the base of the cone AB contracts itself down to the point S, the body in the present is also moving across the plane of the actual representations of the world. The other is an ascending movement of perception made at S into the cone, which forms the planes such as A'B' and A''B'' within the cone. These two movements are simultaneous and reciprocal; the planes A'B' and A''B'' are added by a new perception, but at the same time, each plane is a contraction of the entire memory cone in different degrees. In other words, a new plane A<sup>n</sup>B<sup>n</sup> is formed by different repetitions of the AB. As long as the point S is in movement, the planes between S and AB continue to be multiplied. As Jay Lampert says, “every memory is ready to be repeated at every moment in the present. Each is relayed virtually at each moment, and each, or all, might be actualized at any given moment, albeit in a different way relative to each new present.”<sup>108</sup>

We can now locate the two kinds of memory we have seen above in the cone. Habit-memory that serves the present would be situated at the bottom part of the cone near S: memories constituted by repeated perception and bodily response. Habit-memory stays

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<sup>107</sup> Deleuze calls this “need-subjectivity” (B52/46).

<sup>108</sup> Lampert, *Simultaneity and Delay*, 145.

close to the body so that it can be brought to the present immediately whenever related perceptions occur. Recollection-memories that are not useful for perception and hardly called upon, thus are situated on the planes near the base AB. The double movement that forms these planes shows that the actual emerges from the virtual, and the virtual is mobilized by the actual.

Therefore, with Deleuze's second synthesis of memory a present moment is a most contracted state of the entire past. He writes, "[t]he present can be the most contracted degree of the past which coexists with it only if the past first coexists with itself in an infinity of diverse degrees of relaxation and contraction at an infinity of levels (this is the meaning of the famous Bergsonian metaphor of the cone [...])" (DR 83/112). Every actual present moment has to go through the double movement of the entire memory cone, the virtual. The past is not formed after the present as a feeble copy of it, but rather as a condition of the present. Deleuze notes that as a condition, "the pure element of the past in general *pre-exists* the passing present" (ibid., emphasis added). The past, in this sense, is the ground (*fondement*) of time, whereas the present is the foundation (*fondation*) of time.

### **Memory and Subjectification: the time of the unconscious**

Bergson's theory of memory, on which Deleuze bases the second synthesis, is peculiar in that it places an emphasis on the kind of memory that exceeds the boundaries of consciousness and gives it an ontological status.<sup>109</sup> Memory (with 'M') for both Bergson and Deleuze is virtual, inactive and unconscious. Yet it is what constitutes time as a *whole* – the

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<sup>109</sup> Deleuze distinguishes the Bergsonian notion of the virtual as the unconscious from the Freudian unconscious: "We must nevertheless be clear at this point that Bergson does not use the word 'unconscious' to denote a psychological reality outside consciousness, but to denote a nonpsychological reality – being as it is in itself" (B 56/50).

whole that differentiates itself and produces the present as its fruit. Here is the set of concepts corresponding to the actual-virtual pair that Deleuze utilizes:

The Virtual	The Actual
Ontological past	Psychological past
- Pure past (the <i>being</i> of the past)	- Old (former) presents
- Pure memory/ Memory	- Memory images
- Transcendental memory	- Empirical memory
Subsistence	Existence
Past	Present
Memory	Perception
The unconscious	The conscious
Passive synthesis	Active synthesis

Table 3. The Virtual and the Actual

Deleuze uses various terms to indicate the ontological past: pure past, the *being* of the past, Memory, pure memory, transcendental memory, etc. Pure past and the *being* of the past are to be distinguished from our common understanding of the past as an accumulation of old presents. Pure memory and Memory (*Mémoire*) are Bergson's terms, contrasted with particular image-like memories (*souvenirs*) that are mental representations of specific moments in the past. In order to emphasize that the virtual memory functions as a condition for the psychological memory at the actual level, Deleuze uses the term 'transcendental memory' that differs from empirical memory in the Kantian sense.

The second synthesis of memory not only constitutes time as the past but also produces a form of subjectivity. In *Bergsonism*, Deleuze calls the kind of subjectivity that emerges from the Bergsonian pure memory 'recollection-subjectivity.' We said that a survival of the past preserved in itself and the realm of the virtual reveal a temporal dimension outside consciousness. The pure, ontological past working in the background of our psychological experience of time suggests that the production of the subject involves the temporal structure beyond the time of individual consciousness. Below I will examine the



problem of subjectification in time in relation to Deleuze's claim that time as subjectification is Memory, by showing the subject formation is structured by the actual-virtual schema.

If our consciousness is present-oriented and tending toward practical need, as Bergson-Deleuze holds, how can an individual, conscious subject access the virtual? Since pure memory cannot be brought to our consciousness at will, the question becomes how we can get to the memory itself without reducing it to a former present or actual present. Deleuze seems to address this problem when he talks about the ways in which the present is understood in relation to the past. In both the first and the second syntheses, the present is a product of contraction. In the first synthesis it is a contraction of successive instants that are independent from each other (DR 82/112). The originary subjectivity appears as a point of synthesis but it is still a synthesis of passing present. According to Deleuze, the second synthesis 'deepens' the first one. In this synthesis the present is understood as the most contracted state of the entire past. Here the contraction in the present is seen as the outcome of the actualization of the virtual memory. The relation between the present and the past in the second synthesis has important implications for what is repeated in the present; what appears to be repeated in the present, thus to our consciousness is a manifestation of what is more profound. In short, the present can be understood as a moment in actual present that passes, but also as a locus of the actualization of the virtual.

Deleuze explains this double dimension of the present with two kinds of repetition, in terms of which the present can be thought in relation to the past: bare and clothed repetition. The former concerns independent instants reappearing at different times, and the latter a repetition of coexisting levels of the whole. For example, if an image of a *Diplodocus* dinosaur comes to my mind after seeing Dippy (a public sculpture of

Diplodocus in Pittsburgh) the day before, it can be seen as a simple repetition of the same image of Diplodocus dinosaur *at the actual level*. But viewed from the virtual dimension, the perception of the sculpture itself is already a contracted differences— my past perceptions of dinosaur statues, dream images, the color of the scarf surrounding the neck of the dinosaur, the speed at which the bus I was on was passing the sculpture, etc.: a synthesis of the coexisting levels of the whole. This perception then forms a level in the virtual whole, as a memory ready to be actualized at any moment. The recollection-image that seems to be a repetition of the same at the actual level is a contraction of a differential level of the whole, which itself is already a contraction: the actualization of the virtual. The seemingly repeated of the image of Dippy is, at the virtual level, resulted by the synthesis of differences contracted. In this regard, Deleuze says that clothed-virtual repetition can be called a repetition of difference; it is a repetition of the pure past understood as the open whole that can be repeated or contracted differently in each present moment. Bare-actual repetition, however, concerns the return of the same (DR 84/114).

### **Subject as the locus of actualization**

We have seen two forms of subjectivity produced by the syntheses of time. If the first synthesis of habit shows the emergence of subjectivity as a memory stored in the body, the second synthesis of memory explains how the habit-memory gets preserved in the memory that exceeds the conscious subject, in the time of the unconscious. In the latter, the subject is constituted as the virtual memory actualizes itself in the present. With the actual-virtual scheme, the subject seems to be always in the making, rather than the unified center of temporal synthesis.

Let us now examine the place of the subject in the second synthesis, using Bergson's inverted cone. In the cone, the actual present is represented as the point S, where the body and the consciousness of the subject are located, and where the two movements in the cone – descending and ascending – intersect. In our active synthesis at the actual level, the subject seems to be placed in the trace of the point S, as successive moments of former and actual presents. But at the virtual level, the subject has to be understood in terms of the present as a contraction of the pure past that forms coexisting levels in the cone beyond the passing moment. In Deleuze's term, it is as if the present doubles itself as it reflects itself and forms an extra dimension to the present (DR 80/109).<sup>110</sup>

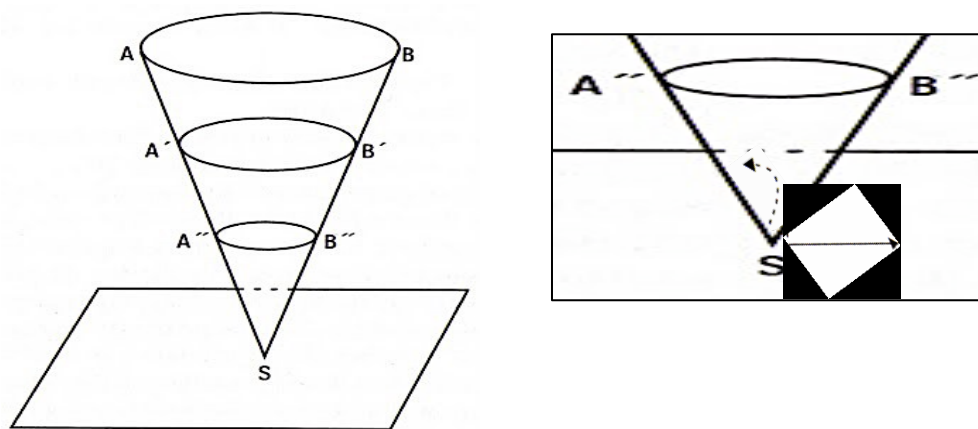
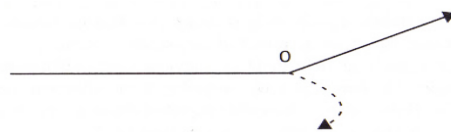


Figure 6. The bifurcation of the present

<sup>110</sup> Deleuze notes that on the level of active synthesis of memory, the past appears to be a former present. It seems to be trapped between two presents – former present (*ancien présent*) and actual present (*actuel présent*). He argues that the actual present contains an extra dimension where it reflects itself as it forms the memory of the former present. He calls this the present's 'own representativity' in its representation of the former present. We will return to this problem of 'bifurcation' in our analysis of the third synthesis.

In his book on cinema, Deleuze speaks of the bifurcation of time in the present, which he calls the 'crystal image of time.' The figure below demonstrates a splitting of the instant into the present and the past, which coexists with the present that it was.



Deleuze writes: "What constitutes the crystal-image is the most fundamental operation of time: since the past is constituted not after the present that it was but at the same time, time has to split itself in two at each moment as present and past [...] it splits in two dissymmetrical jets, one of which makes all the present pass on, while the other preserves all the past" (C2, 81/108-109).

The doubling of the present indicates the two-fold movement that involves the contraction of the cone. When a plane in the cone contracts with the present, a past emerges from Memory. At the same time, the virtual produces a new actual present, which also enters into the virtual memory. In this sense, the subject as the locus of actualization is constituted by the oscillation between the summit and the base of the cone. Memory, the being of the past, is what produces the present as it differentiates from itself. In this self-differentiation of Memory, the subject is formed at the very splitting between the actual present and the coexisting levels of the past.

Deleuze's passive synthesis of the past based on the actual-virtual schema does not present the concept of a subject who makes conscious decisions or holds intentionality. In contrast, it aims to demonstrate that there is something outside of the consciousness that renders these things possible. If Kant's second synthesis of reproduction concerns the memory as previous conscious perceptions, Deleuze's synthesis of memory shows how the reproduction is conditioned by the unconscious, virtual memory. By giving an ontological status to memory, both Bergson and Deleuze challenge the idea that the past is constituted after the present as its duplicated or weakened form: "Only the present is 'psychological'; but the past is pure ontology; pure recollection has only ontological significance" (B 56/51). The pure past as a condition for the psychological time of consciousness never ceases to exist, but it only ceases to be present or to be useful. What constitutes recollection-subjectivity in this synthesis is the reciprocal relation between the two realms of the actual and the virtual.

## **Empirical and transcendental memory: Forgetting within Memory**

The second synthesis of the past shows us Memory as the being of the past, different from our ordinary sense of memory. Deleuze calls this sort of memory that introduces the realm of the virtual ‘transcendental memory’ as opposed to the empirical, psychological memory as former presents. Here we will see how the active synthesis of memory at the actual level is grounded by the passive synthesis of memory at the virtual level. We will be introduced to the two senses of ‘forgetting’ Deleuze uses in relation to the empirical and transcendental memory.

According to Deleuze, empirical memory “may be represented beyond forgetting by active synthesis, in so far as forgetting is empirically overcome” (DR 85/115). For example, empirical memories of a specific event, like what I did last Thursday, can be recovered by a conscious effort when temporarily lost. In most cases this sort of empirical forgetting is overcome if I go back and read the email correspondences around that time or look at the pictures taken then. However, transcendental memory is related to what Deleuze calls *essential* or *absolute forgetting*, since it concerns the present that was never present or actual. “Transcendental memory does not address memory without addressing *the forgetting within memory*” (DR 140/183, emphasis added). Virtual memory is contingently ‘immemorable’ for the empirical memory, since it cannot be accessed with a conscious effort to recall.

But why do we call it forgetting, if it has never been actualized in our consciousness and never been an object of empirical memory? To answer this question, we need to understand how the virtual in Deleuze works as the transcendental in the Kantian sense, that is, as the condition for the possibility of experience without being the object of experience itself. As we have seen in the first section of this chapter, Deleuze redefines the

transcendental as the condition of real experience, rather than possible experience. Deleuze contends that the transcendental synthesis of imagination in Kant that conditions the second synthesis of reproduction is merely derived from the workings of empirical memory. Unlike the Kantian *a priori* forms that are independent of empirical contents, the transcendental-virtual memory in Deleuze grounds empirical-actual memory (reproduction) as it itself goes through constant change. As Williams notes, Memory is a foundation for time without being an unchanging ground.<sup>111</sup> Transcendental memory is always working in the background when empirical memory is produced. That is to say, we cannot recall a memory without having it go through the whole of time. Even when I recall what I did last Thursday, the memory retrieved is not the same as the memory initially formed. A past event is never recovered as it was, but *relived* when brought back in the present at the actual level as empirical memory. Put differently, Memory never stays the same but is reconstituted, re-situated, and renewed every time it is remembered: the virtual memory renews itself constantly in its self-differentiating movement. When Deleuze says that transcendental memory concerns the forgetting within memory, he means that it can only produce empirical memory as renewed. We will examine more closely this idea of 'Forgetting' as the renewal of the transcendental - ontological Memory in the next section.

Why then are the workings of transcendental-virtual memory underneath empirical-actual memory hardly noticeable? Most of the time our consciousness is limited to the level of active syntheses that concludes in the *recognition* of an object. In a rare moment, however, we run into objects that reveal the process itself leading up to recognition. Let us return to the example of Dippy. Suppose that I see the sculpture every morning on the way to work,

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<sup>111</sup> James Williams, *Gilles Deleuze's Philosophy of Time: A Critical Introduction and Guide* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011), 76.

and I recognize it as the same object automatically without having to recall my past perceptions of it. One day, it may ‘speak’ to me in the way that it unexpectedly brings up a memory from my childhood. In this moment the recognition of it as the same object gets delayed or even fails, interrupted by the memories that I would not have been able to recall otherwise. Deleuze calls this a transcendental form of memory or the ‘nth’ power of memory, in the sense that it takes the faculty of memory beyond its empirical contents that can be voluntarily retrieved. The transcendental operation of memory takes us to ‘what can only be recalled’ but cannot be sensed, imagined, or thought. It is the object that cannot simply be recognized– “the object of encounter,” as Deleuze calls it – that forces empirical memory to its transcendental operation.<sup>112</sup> This shows that the empirical function of memory is conditioned by the contraction of the virtual memory, the whole of time.

As that which conditions the active synthesis of reproduction in Kant (empirical memory), Deleuze’s passive synthesis of the past shows the transcendental operation of Memory (transcendental memory). In this synthesis, the present is produced by the virtual, and subjectivity is understood as the locus of actualization. In the following section on the third synthesis of the future, we will look more closely at the notion of ‘Forgetting’ that seems to define the way in which Memory grounds time in its self-differentiation.

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<sup>112</sup> Deleuze presents the discussion of transcendental exercise of the faculties in the chapter “The Image of Thought” in DR. Here Deleuze critiques Kant for presupposing harmony among faculties and shows how the harmony is generated. He finds the model for the accord between faculties without a legislating faculty, in Kant’s ‘Analytic of the Sublime,’ where the faculties relate to one another in the form of ‘free play.’ When the ordinary function of the faculties reaches its limit – i.e. facing the object of encounter, comparable to the object of the sublime in Kant – it arises what Deleuze calls the ‘transcendental exercise.’ The harmony between the faculties in their transcendental exercises or in their ‘nth’ power takes the form of ‘discordant harmony’ in the sense that each of the faculties communicates with another based on its radical difference from the others (DR 146/190). In a sort of forced movement from sense to memory, and from memory to thought, all faculties are unhinged and it is this discord of the faculties that forms a harmony. Deleuze writes: “The transcendental form of a faculty is indistinguishable from its disjointed, superior or transcendent exercise. [...] The transcendent exercise must not be traced from the empirical exercise precisely because it apprehends that which cannot be grasped from the point of view of common sense” (DR 143/186).

## 2.4 Third synthesis of the future

We have seen in the second synthesis that the self-differentiating movement of Memory is the ground of time as well as subject formation. If the second synthesis explains the time of pure past, and the present and the future as its dimensions, why do we need a third synthesis? Is there anything more to be said about memory? How can memory be a category of the future?

### Memory as reminiscence

In the section called 'Inadequacy of memory: the third synthesis of time,' Deleuze explains why the pure past understood as reminiscence is insufficient (DR 87/118). Here he juxtaposes Bergson's pure past as 'the past that was never present' with Platonic reminiscence to discuss the equivocation of Memory ("all the ambiguity of Mnemosyne was already implicit in the second synthesis of time." DR 88/119). Plato's doctrine of reminiscence describes the moment of learning, which "implies a distinction within the soul between a 'before' and an 'after'; it implies the introduction of a first time, in which we forget what we knew, since there is a second time in which we recover what we have forgotten" (DR 87/118). Deleuze notes that the Platonic theory of reminiscence introduces a sort of transcendental memory inaccessible through empirical memory as a source of knowledge, as opposed to the innateness of knowledge in Descartes. However, the memory that we recover here is a mere replaying of past events in the present. The pure past here is reduced to 'a *mythical* present'; it is a memory that can be brought back to the mind by recovering what had been forgotten.

This time undoubtedly finds its ground in an it-self – that is, in the pure past of the Ideas which *arranges the order of presents in a circle* according to their decreasing or increasing resemblances to the ideal, but also removes from the circle those souls



which have been able to preserve or recover the realm of the in-itself. The Ideas none the less remain the ground on which the successive presents are organized into the circle of time, so that the pure past which defines them is itself still necessarily expressed in terms of a present, as an ancient mythical present (DR 88/119, emphasis added).

The Platonic reminiscence is also irreducible to the present empirically construed, in that it cannot be represented by active synthesis, but the pure past in this sense is expressed in terms of a present, an ancient *mythical* present. That is, it is a recollection of the past as it was. The pure past of the Ideas serves as a ground in that the present is evaluated by its resemblance to the ideal state in the past – its relation to the *static* virtual, actualized as the same.

However, it is important to note that Deleuze is neither questioning the validity of Bergson's theory of Memory as the virtual, nor completely equating the notion of pure past with Platonic reminiscence. He simply finds it limited for the account of the future, more precisely, for the account of repetition as a category of the future. Deleuze revisits the example of involuntary memory later in the text, in the 'Note on the Proustian experiences,' where he discusses its relevance to the third synthesis. He says: "The Proustian formula 'a little time in its pure state' refers first to the pure past, the in-itself of the past or the erotic synthesis of time, but more profoundly to the pure and empty form of time [...]" (DR 122/160).

The problem Deleuze finds in the pure past as reminiscence is that it constitutes time in terms of a repetition of the same (the present as a repetition of the pure past of the Ideas), i.e., time in a circular form. As I argued in the previous chapter, Deleuze ultimately aims to construe a notion of time based on difference by freeing time from movement. His account of the temporal syntheses serves the same purpose, but in terms of the three dimensions of

time. The synthesis of the future will prove itself to be a synthesis of difference that enables the production of the new. In the first synthesis we see how the subject is formed through habit-memory. This involves a task of showing habit not as a simple repetition but drawing something new. The second synthesis explains pure memory (pure past) that habit is a repetition of. Here we see that the repetition of Memory is its self-differentiating movement. The subject is now understood as a locus of actualization of the virtual memory. The third synthesis will present habit and memory in a different relation: forgetting becomes more essential as a force of repetition than habit or memory.

It seems to me that the transition from the second to the third synthesis is different from that between the first and the second syntheses. The second synthesis of the past complements or conditions the first one, however, the third synthesis of the future changes the dynamic between the three syntheses since it takes the other syntheses as its object of synthesis. According to Deleuze, the present is an agent (repeater), and the past is a condition (repetition itself). The synthesis of the future produces what is independent from both the agent and the condition ('that which is repeated') (DR 94/125). As it 'overturns' the agent and the condition of time, I believe the third synthesis accomplishes two things: (1) the dissolution of the self (or, the account of the fractured I and the passive self) and (2) the liberation of time from its subordination to movement. It is not accidental that Deleuze opens the discussion on the third synthesis with these two themes, the problem of Cogito and limits of memory. With regard to these two themes, the two most important references in the third synthesis are given – Kant and Nietzsche: Kant for the relationship between time and subjectivity and Nietzsche for the doctrine of eternal return.

## Eternal return and the synthesis of the future

First, let us look at the role Forgetting plays. We said above that the pure past understood as reminiscence raises a problem of circular time. Deleuze attempts to break the circle with Nietzsche's eternal return as the return of the new and Kant's 'straight line of time.' As we have noted, Deleuze explains the subjectification process in time in terms of memory, and for the subject's relation to the future, we need to see how transcendental memory works. Memory in its ordinary sense denotes a recollection or a replay of past events. Deleuze, in redefining memory as that which reconstitutes and renews itself over time, introduces the idea of 'memory with forgetting.' He distinguishes two kinds of forgetting: empirical and essential forgetting (DR 140/183). Empirical forgetting concerns empirical memory, or what Deleuze calls 'a contingent past,' which is the empirical content of the past. Essential forgetting, however, has to do with the being of the past, or the past in general. It concerns a *renewability* of Memory in its repetition. "Forgetting [*L'oubli*] is no longer a contingent incapacity [*impuissance*] separating us from a memory [*souvenir*] which is itself contingent: it exists within essential memory as though it were the 'nth' power of memory [*la nième puissance de la mémoire*] with regard to its own limit or to that which can only be recalled" (ibid.). Forgetting constitutes a power of becoming new within memory. It frees one from an ossified past and gives a chance of becoming.

It is from Nietzsche's eternal return that Deleuze derives this idea of Forgetting as a repetition of the new, or as he calls a repetition as 'a category of the future.' As we look at Deleuze's reading of Nietzsche, we will limit ourselves to his interpretation of eternal return with regard to the idea of Forgetting. In his book on Nietzsche, Deleuze refers to a passage from *Thus spoke Zarathustra*, where Nietzsche contrasts a circular image of time with a non-

circular one and describes eternal return as a passing moment (NP 48/75, see also DR 297/380).

Behold this gateway, dwarf!' I went on: 'it has two aspects. Two paths come together here: no one has ever reached their end. This long lane behind us: it goes on for an eternity. And that long lane ahead of us – that is another eternity. 'They are in opposition to one another, these paths; they abut on one another: and it is here at this gateway that they come together. The name of the gateway is written above it: "Moment." 'But if one were to follow them further and ever further and further: do you think, dwarf, that these paths would be in eternal opposition?' 'Everything straight lies,' murmured the dwarf disdainfully. 'All truth is crooked, *time itself is a circle.*' 'Spirit of Gravity!' I said angrily, 'do not treat this too lightly! [...] From this gateway Moment a long, eternal lane runs back: an eternity lies behind us.' 'Must not all things that can run have already run along this lane? Must not all things that can happen have already happened, been done, run past? 'And if all things have been here before: what do you think of this moment, dwarf? Must not this gateway, too, have been here – before?'<sup>113</sup>

Deleuze's reading of eternal return in this passage focuses on two things: 1) the 'Moment (*Augenblick*)' as a present moment where the passage of time diverges into the past and the present, and 2) how the repetition in the Moment should be understood. Deleuze claims that eternal return as "a synthesis of time and its dimensions" provides the answer to the problem of the passage of time (NP 48/75), and that Zarathustra's strong rejection of the circular image of time in this passage is the key to apprehending 'what it is that returns' in the eternal return understood as such.

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<sup>113</sup> Friedrich W. Nietzsche, 'Of the vision and the riddle', *Thus spoke Zarathustra*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2003), 178 (emphasis added).

Let us begin with the second point. According to Deleuze, the cyclical time that the dwarf or ‘Spirit of Gravity’ advocates here is the idea that ‘what is to come’ seen from the

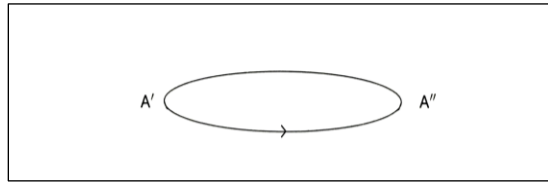


Figure 7. The circular image of time

present moment is nothing but the repetition of ‘what has already happened.’ That is to say, the eternal line stretched to the past and to the future

forms a closed circle. Thus, time unfolds like the two ends of the same thread. As in the Platonic reminiscence, the present is understood in terms of the replay of the past. A’ and A’’ differ only in their degrees of similarity to A that grounds both of them. In this picture, there is nothing new to come in the future. This leads us to think of ‘eternal return’ as the return of the same.

Deleuze notes that this idea that “eternal return means the return of Everything, of the Same and the Similar” is exactly what Nietzsche tries to resist (e.g. Zarathustra’s nightmare in the section ‘The Convalescent’) (DR 298/381). He writes,

He knows that a circular repetition would necessarily be of this type. That is why Zarathustra denies that time is a circle, and replies to the dwarf: ‘Spirit of Gravity, do not simplify matters too much!’ By contrast, he holds that time is a straight line in two opposing directions. If a strangely decentred circle should form, this will be only ‘at the end’ of the straight line ... (ibid.)

If eternal return does not denote a repetition of the same, what is it that returns? What does Deleuze mean by ‘a straight line of time’ and a ‘decentered circle’? We said that Deleuze reads eternal return at the “Moment,” as a passing moment (*l’instant qui passe*). Zarathustra and the dwarf are at the gateway, where time diverges into two opposite directions. From this point time past runs in one direction and time to come runs in the other, both eternally. So, for Deleuze eternal return concerns what returns in this moment that passes. About the repetition in the ‘Moment,’ Deleuze says,

It is not being that returns but rather the returning itself that constitutes being [...] It is not some one thing which returns but rather returning itself is the one thing which is affirmed of diversity or multiplicity. In other words, identity in the eternal return does not describe the nature of that which returns but, on the contrary, the fact of returning for that which differs (NP 48/75-76).

According to Deleuze, repetition does not involve the identity of what returns but the fact that something returns. What is tricky about this returning thing is that it returns differently every time it returns: It returns as that *which differs from itself*. As we have seen in the previous chapter, Deleuze defines time in terms of self-differentiation. So, if eternal return describes a passing moment as Deleuze says, it is a repetition of self-differentiating movement of time: “*Returning is the being of that which becomes*” (ibid.).

In his book on Nietzsche, Deleuze sees the eternal return itself as a synthesis of time that explains the passage of time. It shows that the present must coexist with itself as what is past as well as what is to come. In the second synthesis we have seen that for the moment to pass, it has to be present at the same time it is past. For the moment to be the present as well as the past it has to enter a relation with itself – the doubling of the moment itself. In this sense, the eternal return seems to denote the return of this dynamic relation between the past and the present in every moment: a present moment is considered as the most contracted state of the entire past. But this raises a further question concerning whether the present is a mere repetition of the past. This is where the eternal return as the synthesis of the future comes into play. Since what returns in the moment is the autonomous, self-differentiating movement of time, the synthetic relation of the present and the past should be able to produce something new. What is produced by the self-differentiation does not resemble the condition or the agent of repetition. Without this third term, the process of

differentiation would be merely a reproduction, a repetition of the same. Thus, we misinterpret the expression eternal return if we understand it as “return of the same.”

Let us note here that the image of time as a straight line Deleuze uses here is more complicated than what is commonly conceived as the linear notion of time that relies heavily on causality. What differentiates Deleuze’s straight line of time from linear time is that it is still based upon repetition. Time as a whole repeats its self-differentiating movement, allowing the moment to pass as well as producing the new in the moment to come. In this sense Deleuze calls this repetition in the eternal return a *decentered* circle. Eternal return affects only the new and concerns only the third time of the series. “[I]f eternal return is a circle [...] it is a constantly decentred, continually tortuous circle which revolves only around the unequal” (DR 55/78). Time is a straight line in the sense that the future exceeds the past as condition and the present as the agent, i.e., that which conditions the production of it. It is a straight line with a decentered circle at the end in that the novelty of the future is produced by the present moment entering into a relation with the entire past that returns every moment in its self-differentiation.

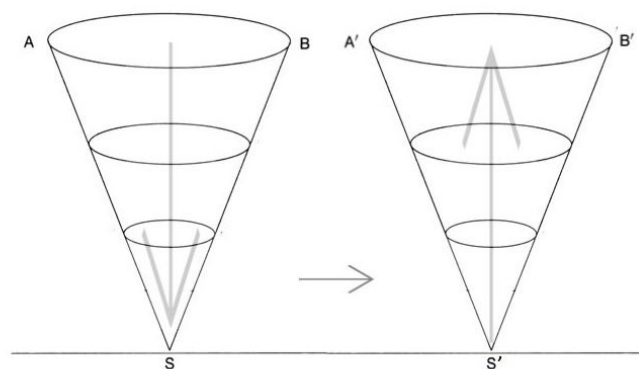


Figure 8. The straight line of time: self-differentiation of Memory

Earlier we discussed the pure past as a ground of time in terms of Memory. It seems that Deleuze terms the production of the new from the synthetic relation between the pure past and the present, *Forgetting*. That the present is a contraction of the pure past –actualization of the virtual – relates to the self-differentiation of Memory. That the present as the actual reconstructs the whole of time as the virtual concerns Forgetting. We may say forgetting is a condition for the complete renewal or overturning of transcendental memory; it enables the moment to come to be ‘unequal’ to what it is born out of. Thus, Deleuze says that Forgetting makes repetition a category of the future.

[R]epetition is the thought of the future; it is opposed to both the ancient category of reminiscence and the modern category of habitus. It is in repetition and by repetition that Forgetting becomes a positive power and superior unconscious (for example, forgetting as a force is an integral part of the lived experience of eternal return) (DR 7-8/15).

Let us remember that Deleuze redefined the relationship between time and movement by articulating time as what differentiates itself from itself. In his account of the passive synthesis, he discusses this self-differentiating movement in terms of repetition, that is, a repetition of Memory. Repetition describes the fact that this movement recurs, thus ultimately the force that enables time to pass. In the synthesis of the future, this repetition turns out to be a repetition of difference, Memory with Forgetting. Forgetting is a force of repetition that enables the production of the new. As Ansell-Pearson notes, it is due to the Forgetting that “we are given the chance of becoming.”<sup>114</sup> It is in this synthesis that time ceases to be a circle and becomes liberated from movement.

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<sup>114</sup> Keith Ansell-Pearson, *Philosophy and the Adventure of the Virtual: Bergson and the Time of Life* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 200.



## Empty form of time and the passive self

How is subjectivity defined in the synthesis of the future? If the Forgetting enables the production of ‘the new’ by overturning the past as a condition, what does this entail in terms of subjectivity? Deleuze describes this time of the future as an “empty form of time” and the subject produced under this form “the fractured I,” deploying Kant’s terminology. As we have already discussed in the previous chapter, the Kantian legacy is significant in Deleuze, especially in his account of passive self and the empty form of time. By defining time as the ‘empty form,’ Kant addresses the problem of the split between the I and the self. Kant observed that there is a split between ‘the I as thinking subject’ and ‘the I as an object that is thought’ when we try to intuit ourselves: ‘the I’ can be given to me only as I appear to myself, rather than as I am in itself (CPR, B156). According to Kant, we intuit ourselves only as we are internally affected by ourselves, that is, by the affection of a passive self. It is under the form of time that we affect ourselves. From Kant’s notion of time as a form of auto-affection, Deleuze develops the idea that “[t]ime signifies a fault or a fracture in the I (*Je fêlé*) and a passivity in the self (*moi dissous*)” (DR 86/117).

Time as a fracturing force to the unity of the I concerns the independence of the future from the present and the past. Here is the passage where Deleuze explains the relationship between the three syntheses:

The first synthesis, that of habit, constituted time as a living present by means of a passive foundation on which past and future depended. The second synthesis, that of memory, constituted time as a pure past, from the point of view of a ground which causes the passing of one present and the arrival of another. In the third synthesis, however, the present is no more than an actor, an author, an agent destined to be effaced; while the past is no more than a condition operating by default. The synthesis of time here constitutes a future which affirms at once both the unconditioned character of the product in relation to the conditions of its production, and the independence of the work in relation to its author or actor (DR 93-94/125).

Here Deleuze writes that the synthesis of the future involves the agent (present) and the condition (past), but the future itself as a product is not tied to either of them. Thus, the synthesis that constitutes the future in time is characterized as ‘groundless (*sans-fond*),’ or ‘un-grounding.’ From the viewpoint of the subject, this synthesis is manifested in a break between the before and the after of an act that supersedes both the condition (past) and the agent (present). According to Deleuze, there are three moments in this ‘un-grounding’ act: first, there is a time at which the imagined act is supposed ‘too big for me,’ which determines the *a priori* past, the before. The second time is the present of metamorphosis or a doubling of the self to become equal to the act. In the third time where future appears, the act becomes coherent, leaving the self ‘fractured.’ (DR 89/120-121)

To put it in Kant’s terms, the three moments above demonstrate a synthesis of the active I and the passive self:

- (1) ‘the I’ conditioned by the past
- (2) the split of ‘the I’ or doubling of the self in the present
- (3) the self, going beyond the condition, that becomes unequal and incoherent with ‘the I’

What returns in time in the third synthesis is the fracture in the I and the caesura in time that overturns its empirical content and its ground. Time returns as an empty form. So, Deleuze says eternal return is “the secret coherence which establishes itself only by excluding my own identity, the identity of the self, the world and God” (DR 90-91/122).

But why is this time an empty form? Deleuze says that since the future as a product of the synthesis is not bound to the present as actor or the past as condition, the only thing that remains unchanged in this synthesis is the form of time that brings about the new: “time is the most radical form of change, but the form of change does not change” (DR 89/120). From the viewpoint of the subject, the form of time that ruptures the I in the present

concerns the subject's becoming capable of an act that exceeds its past condition. Deleuze says this act is "adequate to time as a whole" (ibid.). In the split of the subject, the passive self becomes equal to the act as it is forced beyond the determinations of the active I, to the open whole. It takes upon itself a self-differentiating movement of the whole that becomes an 'Other.' The act divides the before and the after, and the I and the self into two unequal parts. As discussed earlier, when time is conceived as a form of qualitative change in the whole, it ceases to be subordinated to movement. This time as an empty form that forces the subject to the open, and that exceeds individual substances, is a model of time liberated from the overly simple cycles of time.

### **Reconstructing Kantian 'Recognition': Resonance**

What does Deleuze's synthesis of the future tell us about Kant's synthesis? In Kant, the second synthesis of reproduction leads to the third synthesis of recognition that requires the transcendental unity of apperception. In Deleuze's passive synthesis, the unity is not presupposed. He explains how the recognition is produced by the reciprocal determination of different temporal series that *resonate* with one another. If 'the transcendental object=x' was the pure form of perception in Kant, with Deleuze, we locate the object = x in the pure past, a past which was never present. It is a virtual object that can only be accessed by transcendental Memory with Forgetting.

Let us look at Proust's famous example of involuntary memory Deleuze discusses. The taste of madeleine invokes Marcel's memory of the village of his childhood, Combray. Suppose that M refers to the taste of madeleine. In terms of recognition, this Proustian experience would be explained by the resemblance between  $M_1$  (M in the past moment  $T_1$ ) and  $M_2$  (M in the present moment  $T_2$ ). It is the identity of M underlying the two that enables

the recognition of  $M_2$ . However, such an explanation is only a superficial description of what is happening in the present, according to Deleuze. If it were to simply a matter of recognizing the identity of the two, it would not have been accompanied by the fragment of the pure past, i.e. Combray. Also, the account of recognition does not explain why the sensations in two different moments, supposedly the same, were presented as distinct rather than merged together as in our ordinary recognition. Deleuze says that this is an example of *resonance* that makes recognition possible. He points out that it is actually Combray (X) that brings  $M_1$  to the distinctive moment of  $M_2$  and even produces the identity of  $M_1$  and  $M_2$ , which constitutes the resemblance of the two series: “if the two series succeed one another, they nevertheless coexist in relation to Combray in itself as the object=X which causes them to resonate. [...] Identity and resemblance are therefore once again the result of a differentiator” (DR122/160). In the recognition of M, it is the transcendental unity of the subject and the supposed form of the object as its correlate together that work as the fundamental ground to identify empirical objects  $M_1$  and  $M_2$ , whereas in the Proust-Deleuzian scheme, the identity comes after the resonance of the disparate series  $M_1$  and  $M_2$ , which is produced by the difference itself, Combray. It is a synthesis of difference in the sense that the identity in the present moment is grounded by the difference of the two series.

With resonance, Deleuze provides the genetic account of recognition without the presupposed unity of the transcendental subject. The object=X here is Combray, a past that was never present. It is not what simply enables us to recognize the taste of madeleine as the same taste we had before, but presents two distinct moments as different and has them resonate with one another. Deleuze says that in the voluntary memory or conscious perception, something essential escapes – the past’s being as past: “Combray rises up again

in the present sensation in which its difference from the past sensation is internalized.”<sup>115</sup> In this invocation, Combray rises up in an absolutely new form. It rises up in a “pure past, coexisting with the two presents, but out of their reach, out of reach of the present voluntary memory and of the past conscious perception.”<sup>116</sup> Deleuze defines the power of involuntary memory as follows: the difference in the past moment, the repetition in the present one.

### 3. Time and the Production of the Subject

#### 3.1 The virtual as a new transcendental: Critique of the ‘possible’

In this chapter we have seen that Deleuze, in reconstructing Kant’s synthesis as the time of the unconscious, defines the transcendental condition with the virtual. We said that Deleuze critiques Kant for tracing the transcendental from the empirical; Kant defined the transcendental as a condition of *possible* experience. Deleuze, following Bergson, raises a problem with the notion of the possible.<sup>117</sup> When the possible is defined as ‘what is not impossible,’ this non-impossibility of a thing is a condition of its realization. The possible defined as such precedes the real; something becomes possible only retrospectively after having been realized. It designates what has once been realized and then retrojected into the past. The problem with the idea that the possible is pre-existent to the real is that it reduces ‘the new’ to a mere rearrangement of former elements.<sup>118</sup> Against this idea, Bergson claims, “it is the real which makes itself possible, and not the possible which becomes real” (ibid.).

Deleuze says,

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<sup>115</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Proust and Signs*, trans. Richard Howard (Minneapolis: The Athlone Press, 2000), 60.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid., 61.

<sup>117</sup> Henri Bergson, “The Possible and the Real,” *The Creative Mind*, trans. Mabelle Andison (New York: Philosophical Library, 2007), 73-86.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid., 85.

What Bergson critiques in the idea of the *possible* is that it presents us a simple copy of the product, projected or rather retrojected onto the movement of production, onto invention. But the virtual is not the same thing as the possible: the reality of time is finally the affirmation of a virtuality that is actualized, for which to be actualized is to invent. Because if the whole [*tout*] is not given, it remains that the virtual is the whole [*le tout*].<sup>119</sup>

Deleuze's transcendental method based on the virtual-actual scheme affirms that the virtual as the whole differentiates itself without any pre-existent ideal. It is to affirm "the continuous creation of unforeseeable novelty" that, according to Bergson, philosophy never frankly admitted (*ibid.*). The affirmation of novelty concerns only the third synthesis of the future, where the virtual is defined as a condition for the actual, but an open, constantly changing one.

We can talk about the condition for novelty as a condition because the virtual-actual relation is formal. The actual concerns how things are, and the virtual is about how things could be otherwise. The contents may change, yet the relation between the two stays the same. *It forms a structure, but it is itself an empty form.* There are different ways in which the virtual can be described, but here I dealt exclusively with its temporal dimension – Memory.<sup>120</sup> The first synthesis explains the force of repetition – contraction – that enables the movement of actualization of the virtual. In the second synthesis, this contraction constituting the present turns out to be that of the entire past. It shows how the virtual as Memory conditions the actual. If the first two syntheses deal with the actualization of the virtual, the third one seems to define the relation itself of the virtual and the actual. The virtual is the condition of the actual but it is also reconstituted by what is actualized: The

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<sup>119</sup> Deleuze, "Bergson, 1859-1941," in *Desert Islands and Other Texts (1953-1974)*, edit. David Lapoujade, trans. Michael Tormina (New York: Semiotext(e), 2004), 22-31, 30 (translation modified).

<sup>120</sup> For a discussion of the difference between the possible and the virtual in *Difference and Repetition*, Elizabeth Grosz, "Thinking the New: Of Futures Yet Unthought," in *Becomings: Explorations in Time, Memory and Futures*, edit. Elizabeth Grosz (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999), 15-28.

actual-virtual relation is based upon a mutual transformation.<sup>121</sup> As Daniel Smith puts it, “the actualization of the virtual also produces the virtual.”<sup>122</sup> One way to think about how the actual changes the virtual is that it *constrains*. As one thing actualizes, the ways in which it could be otherwise change accordingly. For example, when candidate X is elected president, not only the relation between the actual terms change, but also the virtual is reorganized in the way that it forms a different problem structure both from the previous one, to which the election of X to the presidency was given as a solution and from the one that the election of Y or Z would have produced.

The idea of the virtual is different from ‘the possible’ defined either as anything that is not impossible or some preceding condition of the real. The former gives an overly optimistic view of the production of the new, whereas the latter reduces the new as a mere rearrangement of what is formerly actualized. Deleuze tries to bring back the production of novelty to the transcendental field, against the Kantian idea of the possible, however he is not blindly praising the novelty, either. As he did with the image of time as a straight line with a decentered circle, he invites us to think of time as a structure of the synthetic relation between the virtual and the actual that brings difference in its repetition.

### 3.2 Subjectification in time

We began the section with Deleuze’s assertion that subjectification in time is Memory. In his synthesis of time, Deleuze shows the virtual-actual relation in terms of Memory (Being of the past) and Forgetting (the future), both of which exceed the conscious,

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<sup>121</sup> Understanding the virtual-actual schema in terms of reciprocal determination is not without controversy. As Dale Clisby points out, some readings suggest the implicit priority of the virtual or a “hierarchy of influence” between the virtual and the actual, which challenges the reciprocity between the two (Dale Clisby, “Deleuze’s secret dualism?,” *Parrhesia* 24 (2015): 127-49); see for example Alain Badiou, *Deleuze: The Clamour of Being*, trans. L Burchill (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 2000); Peter Hallward, *Out of This World: Deleuze and the Philosophy of Creation* (London & New York: Verso, 2006).

<sup>122</sup> Daniel W. Smith, *Essays on Deleuze* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), 253.

present-oriented subject. In doing so, he replaces the notion of the unified subject as a ground for temporal syntheses with ‘subjectification,’ a *process* of the subject formation. Subjectivity is always in the making in a certain structure of time that determines how the present relates to the other non-actual – but equally real – dimensions of time, the past and the future. As Ansell-Pearson says, “[s]ubjectivity is virtual, never ours, and we are given the chance of becoming.”<sup>123</sup> Time is no longer a form of subjective experience but an autonomous form under which the subject is produced. It is in this sense that Deleuze’s synthesis of time overturns the relation between time and subjectivity.

With regard to subjectification, the virtual–actual scheme demonstrates the relation between the time of the unconscious and an empirical subject. I have elucidated the virtual, sub-representational structure of time that produces forms of subjectivity in terms of Memory – contraction-subjectivity from habit-memory and recollection-subjectivity from the Being of the past. And the third synthesis proves the power of Forgetting within this Memory that puts the subject through a radical break between the passive self and the fractured I. Here the transcendental memory as the virtual reveals itself to be ‘self-renewing’ in its actualization, rather than ideally pre-existent to what is realized. To an empirical subject in the present, this movement is manifested as a fracture or a caesura, where ‘the I’ is confronted with the virtual selves competing with one another. The moment of this ‘tremendous’ act/ event is said to be equivalent to ‘the whole of time,’ since this is the moment where the complete renewal of the virtual is presented. This is where the transcendental condition makes itself known to be repeated in the moment. This is how novelty is presented to an empirical self. It shows itself in the form of an act/ event that

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<sup>123</sup> Keith Ansell-Pearson, *Philosophy and the Adventure of the Virtual: Bergson and the Time of Life* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 200.



entirely re-maps the virtual, how the actual subject could be otherwise. It results in a profound divide between the 'before' and the 'after.' It is the renewal of transcendental Memory that reveals itself to the subject in the form of a fracture. The third time empties the empirical contents and redirects the pre-existing patterns formed by habit and memory. Time as a form of change that itself does not change (the virtual-actual schema) renders the subject passive in relation to a temporal structure.

We have seen thus far Deleuze's critique of time subordinated to movement, his notion of time as self-differentiation, and the synthesis of time based on the virtual-actual structure that produces the subject. In the following chapter we will examine how this newly defined transcendental structure of time relates to the socio-economic conception of time. If there is an ontological structure of time that produces subjectivity, what does it tell us about the socially and historically constructed time? Is there any temporal structure imposed by a socio-economic system that may conflict with our ontological condition for becoming? What would the production of 'the new' in the synthesis of the future imply in terms of a social structure? We will explore these questions by looking at the problem of subjectification in capitalism that Deleuze discusses in his later works in collaboration with Guattari. We will be focusing on the tension in the subject formation between different temporalities: the virtual-actual structure as an ontological condition for becoming and a temporality imposed by an economic system, capitalism.

### III. Time in Contemporary Capitalism: A System of Debt

In the previous chapters, we have looked at Deleuze's notion of time defined as a self-differentiation and as a structure that constitutes the subject. In chapter one, we discussed Deleuze's critique of time subordinated to movement. I argued that his critique aims at the substance-based notion of time and its relation to the concept of the subject understood as that which survives change. When time is reconceived in terms of the production of difference in its self-differentiation, the movement-time relation is overturned. In chapter two, we said that this newly defined notion of time functions as a structure that produces the subject. I focused on the temporal structure related to Memory, which Deleuze equates with 'time as subjectification.'

In this chapter, we will examine how the relationship between time and the subject discussed in ontological terms in the first two chapters changes when we take the socio-economic conceptions of time into consideration. In particular, I am interested in looking into the kind of movement to which our sense of time under current economic system is subordinated, i.e., the movement of capital. Thus I shall define the temporality characteristic of financial capitalism and examine how it functions in the process of subject formation. I will do so by putting Deleuze's early theory of time and his later work on capitalism in conversation with each other.

Deleuze's account of the passive synthesis of time in *Difference and Repetition* (1968) suggests that we see time as constitutive of the subject, rather than a subjective form of experience. In his later works written with Félix Guattari under the heading of 'Capitalism and Schizophrenia,' Deleuze discusses capitalism as a 'point of subjectification (*subjectivation*),' though not specifically as a temporal process. Thus I will attempt to bring

these seemingly separate discourses together, in order to establish a coherent theory of subjectification throughout Deleuze's oeuvre. We will also discuss some possible challenges that such reading may face.

Some of the immediate challenges of this task would be determining how to characterize the temporality of financial capitalism and bringing up to date Deleuze and Guattari's work on capitalism dated back to the 1970s, where global financialization was just about to begin. As for the former I dwell on Deleuze's insight in his 1990 essay on the societies of control, where he observes that the social control in contemporary capitalism takes the form of 'debt' and open circuits of banking. Concerning the latter, I will keep the focus on Deleuze and Guattari's reading of Marx's theory of money in *L'Anti-Oedipe* (1972), with an emphasis on the transformation of money in the credit system and show that their view on credit and debt sheds light on the structure of financing today. Here is what I attempt to accomplish specifically in the following: First I will present an extensive analysis of the concept of 'financial capital' and of the systematic dependency of financial capitalism on debt. Then I demonstrate how debt functions as a form of social control by analyzing its temporal structure. Unlike other temporal forms of capitalist control – such as labor time or cycles of production – that demarcate the subject's experience of time externally, debt imposes moral obligations to the past upon her own conscience; thus, its impact on the subject is originated from her internal feeling of guilt. When guilt prevails, one perceives time as a dominant past and a limited future. This will prepare us for a more detailed analysis of the subjectification process through debt in the next chapter, where I claim that the temporal structure of debt results in the failure of synthesizing time as future, and thus in the production of a 'melancholic subject.'

## 1. Time and Capitalism

In this section, I examine the ways in which the relation between time and movement can be defined with regard to the circulation of capital. We begin with various types of monetary movement articulated by Marx to identify the specificity of ‘financial capital.’ Then we move onto Deleuze’s reading of Marx, with a focus on the distinction between money used for the exchange of commodities and money as financing. It will be noted that his reading of Marx was greatly influenced by Suzanne de Brunhoff, a French Marxist economist, who tried to reinvigorate Marx’s theory of money in the 1970s by applying it to a more developed form of capitalism with universalized credit relations. I develop Deleuze’s distinction between two forms of money further to elaborate new forms of power in contemporary financial capitalism. When we get to the next section, we will see that time in the circulation of financial capital serves as that which generates quantitative difference in monetary value and that this ‘power’ of time reproduces the asymmetry between debtor and creditor.

### 1.1 Time and the movement of capital

In what follows, I attempt to apply Deleuze’s idea of ‘time subordinated to movement’ to a particular kind of movement that appears to dominate the perception of time under financial capitalism. In the most general sense, time under the capitalist mode of production is defined according to monetary movements, not only because time is equated with ‘the quantitative reality of labor’ as Marx put it,<sup>124</sup> but also because time itself is

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<sup>124</sup> In Marx, the laborer is conceived as labor time personified as the quantitative determination of labor. We have seen in the first chapter that time in antiquity was secondary to movements, in that it was conceived as a measure of the number of movements. Éric Alliez notes in his reading of Marx that with the idea of labor time, time is conceived as the matter and measure of equivalence. He quotes Marx: “Just as motion is measured by time, so is labor by *labor time*; it is the living quantitative reality of labor” (Karl Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy*,

evaluated by the number of movement of monetary growth, that is, the creation of interest. In this sense, Deleuze and Guattari distinguish contemporary capitalism from the older forms of capitalism based upon the idea of financial capital, that is, the self-generating function of capital. Thus I take the circulation of capital as the kind of movement to which our sense of time under financial capitalism is subordinated. As Marx explained in *Capital*, we can think of four major types of movements in relation to money circulation:

- (1) Exchange between commodities: Commodity–Commodity' (C–C')
- (2) Exchange between commodities with the use of money as a medium: Commodity–Money–Commodity' (C–M–C')
- (3) Use of commodity for profit: Money–Commodity–Money' (M–C–M')
- (4) Creation of profit by investment: Money–Money' (M–M')<sup>125</sup>

These four movements correspond to the different stages in the transformation of money into capital. The (1) C–C' cycle is barter, an exchange of products without using money. Eventually money is introduced to facilitate barter in the (2) C–M–C' movement. Subsequently the transition from the (2) C–M–C' to the (3) M–C–M' occurs. This shift is significant because money begins to serve a different purpose after the transition; in C–M–C', transactions are made through money as a medium, because the value of C and that of C' are incommensurable. Here money is used as a standard measure of value. In the case of the process M–C–M', however, money goes beyond its original function as the measure of value and becomes the end of the transaction itself. Here the commodity is only the means to gain profit, evaluated not for its use value but for its resale value. If money in the C–M–C' is a medium for the simple exchange of commodities, money in the M–C–M' is capital. The

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trans. Frida Knight, in *Collected Works* 6 (New York: International Publishers, 1976), 127, cited in Eric Alliez, *Capital Times: Tales from the Conquest of Time*, trans. George van den Abbeele (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), xvi.).

<sup>125</sup> Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy* Vol.1, trans. Ben Fowkes (New York: Penguin Books, 1992), 247-257.

circulation of capital reaches its culmination in the (4) M-M' that does not involve any commodities or exchanges between them.

The differences in nature of the last two circuits from the first two deserve careful examination. Marx discusses the transition from money as a medium of exchange (C-M-C') to money that serves its own reproduction (M-C-M') in terms of Aristotle's distinction between the art of household management (*oikonomia*) and that of wealth-getting (*chrematistics*).<sup>126</sup> In Book I of the *Politics*, Aristotle distinguishes the natural movement of *oikonomia* driven by needs from the unnatural movement of *chrematistics* driven by the desire for the accumulation of wealth.

There are two sorts of wealth-getting, as I have said; one is a part of household management, the other is retail trade: the former is necessary and honorable, while that which consists in exchange is justly censured; for it is unnatural, and a mode by which men gain from one another. The most hated sort, and with the greatest reason, is usury, which makes a gain out of money itself, and not from the natural object of it. *For money was intended to be used in exchange, but not to increase at interest.* And this term interest (τόκος), which means the birth of money from money, is applied to the breeding of money because the offspring resembles the parent. That is why of all modes of getting wealth this is the most unnatural.<sup>127</sup>

According to Aristotle, the art of wealth-getting as a part of household management (*oikonomia*) concerns the social and natural resource economies, whereas wealth-getting in the form of retail trade (*chrematistics*) involves the manipulation of wealth for the sake of increasing monetary exchange benefits of the individual owner. Aristotle critiques the latter as the secondary use of the goods where one makes a gain out of money itself. Furthermore,

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<sup>126</sup> Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy* Vol.1, trans. Ben Fowkes (New York: Penguin Books, 1992), 342.

<sup>127</sup> Aristotle, *Politics*, in *The Complete Works of Aristotle: The Revised Oxford Translation*, Vol.2, edit. Jonathan Barnes (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 1258a39-1258b8 (emphasis added)

he notes that usury – what we have described as (4) M-M’ – is ‘the most hated sort,’ where money is used to increase at interest.<sup>128</sup>

Far from being the most ‘unnatural’ movement, the M-M’ seems to have become a very common form of monetary transaction in today’s financial capitalism with its ‘normalization of debt.’<sup>129</sup> In the chapters on money that appear in the beginning of *Capital*, Marx’s discussion of credit money concerns money-capital that circulates between financial capitalists and industrial capitalists, who need to borrow money to keep their companies growing. For the industrial capitalists to pay back the money they owe with interest, they need to put it into production to create profit. For the financial capitalists, this particular credit money as interest-bearing capital functions as self-generating capital in the M-M’, independently of the process of production. But the movement of financial capital today involves a much wider group than industrial capitalists and takes a far more sophisticated form than usury, thus we need to look beyond what Marx says about the circulation of money as a general equivalent. Deleuze and Guattari write,

[I]t is unfortunate that Marxist economists too often dwell on considerations concerning the mode of production, and on the theory of money as the general equivalent as found in the first section of *Capital*, without attaching enough importance to banking practice, to financial operations, and to the specific circulation of credit money – which would be the meaning of a return to Marx, to the Marxist theory of money (AO 230/276).<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>128</sup> For detailed comparative analysis of Aristotle and Marx on this point, see Éric Alliez, *Capital Times: Tales from the Conquest of Time*, trans. George van den Abbeele (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), xvii and 3-9.

<sup>129</sup> Lisa Peñaloza and Michelle Barnhart, “Living U.S. Capitalism: The Normalization of Credit/Debt,” *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 38, No.4 (2011): 743-762.

<sup>130</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Robert Hurley, Mark Seem and Helen R. Lane (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983), Henceforth abbreviated as AO.

Many commentators read this passage as the point of break between Deleuze and Guattari with Marx.<sup>131</sup> However, I hope to show in the following how their reading of Marx's theory of money makes it more relevant to the current economic system. Ultimately I aim to articulate the temporality of capital through the M-M' circuit, but in order to do so, we have to take a detour to see why the M-M' circuit is considered to be a predominant form of monetary movement in the financial capitalism. In what follows, we will look at Deleuze and Guattari's reading of Marx's theory of money in two aspects: 1) the dualism between two kinds of money, i.e., the formation of means of payment and the structure of financing, and 2) the movement of financial capital in the M-M' circuit.

## **1.2 Deleuze's reading of Marx through Suzanne de Brunhoff**

### **Two forms of money: exchange money and credit money**

With the introduction of credit money, the role of money in the capitalist production takes two different forms: the formation of means of payment and the structure of financing (AO 229/275). Deleuze and Guattari argue that there is incommensurability between these two flows of money – one measuring a purchasing power determined as 'income,' the other measuring the true economic force, financial capital (AO 237/286). They write,

it is not the same money that goes into the pocket of the wage earner and is entered on the balance sheet<sup>132</sup> of a commercial enterprise. In the one case, there are impotent money signs of exchange value, a flow of means of payment relative to consumer goods and use values, and a one-to-one relation between money and an imposed range of products ("which I have a right to, which are my due, so they're mine"); in the other case, signs of the power of capital, flows of financing, a system of differential quotients of production that bear witness to a prospective force or to a long-term evaluation, not realizable *hic et nunc*, and functioning as an axiomatic of

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<sup>131</sup> See, for instance, Simon Glezos, *The Politics of Speed: Capitalism, the State and War in an Accelerating World* (London: Routledge, 2011), 195; Daniel W. Smith, *Essays on Deleuze* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), 168.

<sup>132</sup> Balance sheet denotes a report that shows the financial position of an enterprise – assets (what it owns), liabilities (what it owes) and equity (shareholders' equity).



abstract quantities. [...] The extreme importance in the capitalist system of the dualism that exists in banking between the formation of the means of payment and the structure of financing, between the management of money and financing of capitalist accumulation, between exchange money and credit money (AO 228/274-275).

In this passage, we see the contrast between the ‘real’ money used to purchase products with the ‘demonetized’ form of money that goes to the industrial capitalists from banks, the financial capitalists.<sup>133</sup> The distinction is drawn between powerless money for exchange and the power of capital, a flow of means of payment and a flow of financing, and finally, the correspondence between money and commodities and differential quotients that determine future production. As we will see, this distinction informs that between C-M-C’ and M-M’.

In his seminar at Vincennes given in 1971, Deleuze says that he borrows the idea of dualism between the forms of money from Suzanne de Brunhoff.<sup>134</sup> The originality of Brunhoff’s reading of Marx lies in her attempt to synthesize Marx’s theory of money as a general equivalent and his analysis of the specific circulation of money in the system of credit and banking,<sup>135</sup> which makes an important contribution to a revival of Marx’s concept of money in the 1970s. Following Brunhoff, Deleuze and Guattari argue that the significance of Marx’s view on money today lies in what it draws on the circulation of credit money – to banking practice, to financial operations (AO 230/277).

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<sup>133</sup> The abstraction of exchange relations and commodity forms has been noted by the readers of Marx, Guy Debord and Jean Baudrillard. Debord describes capital “accumulated to the point where it becomes image” as the ‘spectacle,’ (*The Society of the spectacle*, trans. Ken Knabb (Berkeley: Bureau of Public Secrets, 2014)), whereas Baudrillard observes a system of signs in the consumer society, where the economic exchange value is converted into the ‘sign exchange value’ (Jean Baudrillard, *For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign* (Saint Louis: Telos Press Publishing, 1981)).

<sup>134</sup> Gilles Deleuze, Lecture on December 21, 1971. Retrieved from <https://www.webdeleuze.com/textes/121>. Deleuze also mentions Bernard Schmitt, a neo-classical French economist, who he claims to make the same claim about the dualism of two forms of money as Brunhoff’s.

<sup>135</sup> See Suzanne de Brunhoff, *Marx on Money*, trans. Maurice J. Goldbloom (London: Verso, 2015 [1967]) and “Marx’s Contribution to the Search for a Theory of Money,” in *Marx’s Theory of Money: Modern Appraisals*, edited by Fred Moseley (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

Let us then look at Brunhoff's discussion of the two kinds of money, presented in *Marx on Money* and *L'Offre de Monnaie* [The Money Supply].<sup>136</sup> She talks about them in terms of two different systems: Monetary system (money as the general equivalent for its exchange value), and credit system (money as capitalist financing). Monetary system concerns a simple money circulation that involves circuits of the exchange of commodities. In her discussion of monetary system, Brunhoff refers to Marx: "For example, if a manufacturer receives money on Friday from his banker, he pays his workers on Saturday, who spend much of it immediately at the grocer's, etc., and the grocer brings the money back to the banker on Monday."<sup>137</sup> This circulation of commodities can be expressed as the C-M-C' circuit above. According to Brunhoff, money in the simple circulation, as an abstraction in relation to social process of production, has a *social determination*; its value is validated immediately when you exchange it with a product. However, in the case of the latter, credit money, money appears as if it has private origin – a debtor-creditor relation – and then it is 'socialized' only afterward, when put into the process of production. If I, as a manufacturer (industrial capitalist), take out a loan from the bank (financial capitalists) to upgrade equipment (commercial credit), I can pay it back *with interest* only if I make profit by investing it in a productive process. This monetary circulation does not involve one-to-one relations between money and products, but since the capital was invested in the productive process, it concerns the M-C-M' circuit. In her terms, commercial credit is "on the borderline between monetary system and the credit system."<sup>138</sup>

In addition to commercial credit in the M-C-M' circuit, there is another element that constitutes credit money: bank credit. Bank credit concerns loans that commercial banks or

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<sup>136</sup> Suzanne de Brunhoff, *L'Offre de Monnaie* (Paris: Maspero, 1971).

<sup>137</sup> Brunhoff, *L'Offre de Monnaie*, 120.

<sup>138</sup> Brunhoff, *Marx on Money*, 81.

other financial institutions issue. If Aristotle discussed the M-M' circuit in terms of usury and *chrematistics*, its modern form is found in banking practices.<sup>139</sup> It takes a highly dematerialized form in that it does not involve the circulation of 'real' money, but is only expressed as a transfer of balances and IOUs. As Brunhoff points out, credit money is not socialized immediately, but only when it is distributed via private relations of credit-debt and put into a process of production. It has to be transformed into the money as a means of payment.<sup>140</sup> Echoing Brunhoff, Deleuze and Guattari write,

Thus in credit money, which comprises all the commercial and bank credits, purely commercial credit has its roots in simple circulation where money develops as means of payment (bills of exchange falling due on a fixed date, which constitute a monetary form of *finite debt*). Inversely, bank credit effects a demonetization or dematerialization of money, and is based on the circulation of drafts instead of the circulation of money. This credit money traverses a particular circuit where it assumes, then loses, its value as an instrument of exchange, and where the conditions of flux imply conditions of reflux, giving to the *infinite debt* its capitalist form (AO 229/275, emphasis added).<sup>141</sup>

In the above passage, Deleuze and Guattari note that we have, on the one hand, a simple money circulation where workers and wage earners use money for daily spending, and on the other hand, the movement of financial capital, involved in the cycle of loaned, interest-bearing capital: one engaging directly with commodity exchanges or indirectly through

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<sup>139</sup> "Usury as such does not only continue to exist, but is even freed, among nations with a developed capitalist production, from the fetters imposed upon it by all previous legislation. Interest-bearing capital retains the form of usurer's capital in relation to persons or classes, or in circumstances where borrowing does not, nor can, take place in the sense corresponding to the capitalist mode of production; where borrowing takes place as a result of individual need, as at the pawnshop; where money is borrowed by wealthy spendthrifts for the purpose of squandering [...]" (Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy* Vol.3, trans. Ben Fowkes (New York: Penguin Books, 1992), 600).

<sup>140</sup> Brunhoff, *L'Offre de Monnaie*, 119-120.

<sup>141</sup> The section Deleuze and Guattari's discussion of two kinds money is part of their account of different types of social machine. Thus the section 'civilized capitalist machine' treats a number of other issues around the development of the system. For a detailed discussion on the birth of capitalism, see Jay Lampert, *Deleuze and Guattari's Philosophy of History* (London and New York: Continuum, 2006), 114-142.

production and the other concerning the production and reproduction of capital itself. We will return to the problem of finite and infinite debt in the next section.

If we look at the way we use ‘real’ money and credit money in our daily life, however, the differences in their form do not appear to be so significant. We seem to be able to convert dematerialized bank credit into a circulation of money with no difficulty. I get groceries with my credit card, and I pay my credit card bill when I receive a paycheck by direct deposit. If I take out a loan from the bank to buy a car, the borrowed money goes into a purchase of the commodity. These transactions do not provide us with any reasons to believe that bank credit is a different kind of money from the wage I earn. What do Deleuze and Guattari mean when they call one ‘a true economic force’ and the other ‘a powerless sign’? What makes the two different in terms of *power*? Let us proceed to Brunhoff’s discussion of the convertibility of moneys.

### **The convertibility between two forms of money**

In the credit system that results in the dematerialization of money, we have different forms of money in circulation – bank notes, coins and credit money (drafts, bills, etc.). For money to be used as a general equivalent, various types of money need to be made convertible into one another, so that they would form a homogenous whole. As Brunhoff points out, when we look at the relationship between moneys, we necessarily face the problem of *the value of money*. She notes that money does not have its own value as a base fixed directly by social labor, and “[t]he modification of relations of money-commodity equivalence appears (becomes apparent) through the changes in the relations of equivalence between moneys.”<sup>142</sup> That is to say, the introduction of credit money into the commodity

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<sup>142</sup> Brunhoff, *L’Offre de Monnaie*, 122.

economy changes the nature of the value of money. The question regarding the value of money concerns how the system combines the two forms of money. To put it simply, what we can exchange with a certain amount of money is determined by something external to that specific exchange relation itself, that is, the amount of money that is created and circulated. Brunhoff continues, “the reciprocal convertibility of moneys in circulation implies that it would be recognized as the equivalence of various types of money that form a homogenous whole. [...] Yet it appears that money today, all credit money, escapes this problem of identification from the moment that gold no longer circulates or is exchangeable for bills or deposits.”<sup>143</sup> As she notes, the value of money has become problematic since the collapse of the Bretton Woods system and the gold standard monetary system in 1971. The value of the U.S. dollar is no longer fixed against gold, and the creation and the destruction of money is not restricted by the amount of gold held in reserve.

The question then becomes: how is the value of money determined? How is the convertibility between two forms of money guaranteed? Deleuze and Guattari observe that despite the disparity of the two, *banks* participate in both fields of money and functions as a pivotal point between payment and financing. Deleuze and Guattari refer to Marx on this point: “The central bank is the pivot of the credit system.”<sup>144</sup> And it is not coincidental that what Brunhoff finds most interesting about Marx’s theory of credit money is his analysis of the role of banks – “it incorporates the problem of money into that of financing in a new way.”<sup>145</sup> The role banks play is crucial to understand the conversion between money as a means of payment and financing. Brunhoff writes,

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<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

<sup>144</sup> Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy* Vol.3, trans. Ben Fowkes (New York: Penguin Books, 1992), 572-573.

<sup>145</sup> Brunhoff, *Marx on Money*, 90.

The structure of means of payment is dominated by the role of monetary base (*monnaie centrale*) that assures the homogeneity of moneys while these are issued in the decentered fashion from the indefinite series of private relations between banks and borrowers. The centralization of the guarantee of convertibility goes hand in hand with the decentralization of the issuance.<sup>146</sup>

The argument that Brunhoff presents in this passage can be summarized as the following:

- (1) The monetary base determines the structure of the value of money as means of payment.
- (2) It is this centralization that guarantees the convertibility of the two forms.
- (3) The control through centralization is contingent upon the distribution of money in a decentralized fashion, i.e. private debtor-creditor relation between banks and individuals.

We need to define some terms to understand what is discussed here. The monetary base (hereafter 'MB'; also called, central bank money or high-powered money) is defined as "the sum of currency in circulation and reserve balances (deposits held by banks and other depository institutions in their accounts with the Federal Reserve)."<sup>147</sup> The MB indicates money, the level of which is controlled by the central bank, which is, in the United States, the Federal Reserve Banks (hereafter 'the Fed'). The Fed can alter the MB, and the money supply by controlling interest rates and reserve ratios. First, by lowering interest rates, they can make borrowing money cheaper and encourage individuals to take out more loans and increase spending. Second, reserve ratios concern the portion of commercial banks' deposits required to be stored in reserve: the deposits that are not loaned out to customers, and that need to be kept in case the customers want to withdraw from their account. Thus, by lowering reserve requirement, the Fed can allow commercial banks to lend more of their deposits to customers. With the current system of 'fractional reserve banking,' where only a fraction of deposits must be kept in reserve for withdrawal, most banks are required to hold

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<sup>146</sup> Brunhoff, *L'Offre de Monnaie*, 124.

<sup>147</sup> Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, "Money, Interest Rates, and Monetary Policy." Retrieved from [https://www.federalreserve.gov/faqs/money\\_12845.htm](https://www.federalreserve.gov/faqs/money_12845.htm)

a 10% of their liabilities in reserve (either in the form of vault cash or deposits with the Fed),<sup>148</sup> and the rest can be loaned out to customers. Commercial banks and other depository institutions borrow from the central bank to meet the reserve requirement when they do not have enough cash on hand. The central bank controls the supply of money, using these two methods, and as Brunhoff notes, “[t]he creation of money by the central bank can modify the degree of convertibility between bank money and the monetary base.”<sup>149</sup>

In sum, the introduction of credit money into the commodity economy changes the nature of the value of money. The value of money concerns how the system combines the two forms of money – “Only in the centralized system can the different kinds of money become homogenous and appear as the components of an articulated whole.”<sup>150</sup> The central bank is what guarantees a convertibility of different sorts of money – both bank notes and credit money (drafts, bills, etc.) between each other.<sup>151</sup> In other words, the central bank determines how much of the bank money is converted into other forms of money that are legal tender.

### **Dissimulation by the banks**

We have seen that in the system of credit there are various forms of money, and this raises the problem of the value of money. As the convertibility between two forms of money becomes an issue, the role of banks is considered to be crucial. It is the banks that control the money supply – through monetary policy (central bank) and issuing loans (commercial

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<sup>148</sup> Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, “Reserve Requirements.” Retrieved from <https://www.federalreserve.gov/monetarypolicy/reservereq.htm>

<sup>149</sup> Brunhoff, *L'Offre de Monnaie*, 126.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid., 124 (cited in AO 230/276).

<sup>151</sup> Ibid., 122-124.

banks) –, which determines the value of money as a means of payment. However, Deleuze argues that the convertibility is fictitious in his 1971 seminar:

This convertibility is completely fictitious; it depends on the attachment to gold, it depends on the unity of the markets, it depends on the interest rate. In fact, it is not made in order to function, it is made, according to Suzanne de Brunhoff, in order to *dissimulate* the capitalist operation. The fictitious convertibility, the theoretical, the constant, of one form of money to another, assures the dissimulation of how it works.<sup>152</sup>

As mentioned earlier, the United States went off of the gold standard in 1971, the year in which Deleuze's above seminar was given. But the other factors he mentions upon which the convertibility is dependent seem to be still relevant to current economic system. Deleuze claims here that the capitalist system becomes functional not through the convertibility itself, but by instituting a fictitious convertibility between the two kinds of money. That is to say, for the system to function, it is necessary for the subjects involved in economic activities to believe that the various forms of money are convertible into one another.

According to Deleuze, it is important to note that money as purchasing power and money as financing, despite the fact that they are made to be convertible in the centralized system, are in fact governed by different logic; one according to the law of exchange and the other to the creation and destruction of money. Deleuze and Guattari argue that the fictitious nature of the convertibility is concealed by the role of banks. Thus they talk about the dissimulation of the dualism between the two forms of money in terms of the two aspects of banking practice:

Hence one is correct in speaking of a profound *dissimulation* of the dualism of banking practice. But this dissimulation does not depend on a faulty understanding

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<sup>152</sup> Gilles Deleuze, Lecture on December 21, 1971. Retrieved from <https://www.webdeleuze.com/textes/121>, cited in Christian Kerslake, "Marxism and money in Deleuze and Guattari's *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*: On the conflict between the theories of Suzanne de Brunhoff and Bernard Schmitt," *Parrhesia*, No.22 (2015): 38-78, 45 (translation modified); Kerslake argues that Deleuze represents Brunhoff's position inaccurately here. He points out that it is unclear whether she thinks the convertibility itself is fictitious.



[*méconnaissance*] so much as it expresses the capitalist field of immanence, the apparent objective movement where the lower or subordinate form is no less necessary than the other (it is necessary for money to play on both boards), and where no integration of the dominated classes could occur without the shadow of this unapplied principle of convertibility [...]" (AO 229/275-276).

Here Deleuze and Guattari note that banks are not simply performing a mediating role, but a 'dissimulating' one in the mutation of financial capital into payment money. They also observe that the distinction between social classes is perpetuated with the illusion of the convertibility, or of a homogeneous whole of money. The need for dissimulation shows the dependency of the reproduction of financial capital upon the function of money as means of payment. On this point, they refer to Brunhoff.<sup>153</sup> She writes, "the duality cannot be reabsorbed for it corresponds to the nature of money as a specific social relation dissimulating the relations of production and of reproduction of capital."<sup>154</sup> The necessary dissimulation in question brings us back to the very nature of credit money and the problem of its 'socialization' noted earlier. We said that the flow of financing is not immediately socialized, but only when it is converted into the circulation of money that engages labor, production and commodity exchanges. When money is provided to wage earners, it is presented as a means of payment, but neither the principle that governs the creation of that money nor the power of banks over the value of money is revealed.

For example, when the central bank decides to increase the money supply using the two means mentioned above, it is done through commercial banks, which increase the amount of money in circulation by issuing more loans to their customers. For monetary

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<sup>153</sup> They cite Brunhoff in the following page. "Brunhoff, *L'offre de monnaie* (reference note 73), p. 124: 'The very notion of a monetary mass can have a meaning only relative to the workings of a system of credit where the different kinds of money combine. Without such a system, one would have only a sum of means of payment that would have no access to the social nature of the general equivalent and that could serve only in local private circuits. There would be no general monetary circulation. Only in the centralized system can the different kinds of money become homogeneous and appear as the components of an articulated whole.' And with regard to the objective *dissimulation* in the system, see pp. 110, 114" (AO 230/276).

<sup>154</sup> Brunhoff, *L'offre de monnaie*, 110.

policy to have the expected impact on the commodity economy, individuals are supposed to increase their spending by borrowing more from commercial banks. In this process, the banks earn interest on their money capital. As money supply increases, the value of currency decreases, so does the purchasing power of money. Again, it is crucial to understand that banks do not simply distribute and provide money for commodity circulation, but also *create* money in the form of debt. As we will see shortly, the amount of money in circulation always far exceeds that of legal tender produced by the central bank, since commercial banks can create balances by lending money that they do not have in reserve.<sup>155</sup> In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari summarizes the role of banks as the following: “if the flow of financing-money, or credit money, involves the mass of economic transactions, what banks govern is the conversion of the credit money that has been created into segmentary payment-money that is appropriated, in other words, coinage or State money for the purchase of goods that are themselves segmented (the importance of the interest rate in this respect). What banks govern is the conversion between the two kinds of money, and the conversion of the segments of the second kind into any given good” (MP 226).

Already as early as 1971, Brunhoff warns us of the structural instabilities generated by the ‘credit cycle.’ She points out that there is a precariousness of the socialization of bank money (*la monnaie scripturale*), the private origin of which becomes manifest when facing the limitation of its convertibility into monetary base. When credit is overextended, the

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<sup>155</sup> For instance, the increase of the money supply by quantitative easing (QE), is one way to dissimulate the dualism. QE has been recently adopted as a means by which central banks create money without printing any banknotes by buying securities (government bonds) from banks. This lowers short-term interest rates and encourages banks to take the new money and make more loans. “Several rounds of QE in America have increased the size of the Federal Reserve's balance sheet—the value of the assets it holds—from less than \$1 trillion in 2007 to more than \$4 trillion now” (“What is quantitative easing?” in *Economist*, March 9, 2015).

fictitiousness and fragility of financial capital is exposed in a moment of financial crisis, where the gap between two kinds of money becomes conspicuous. She writes, “the status of money as general equivalent is continuously threatened and reconstituted by the conditions of workings of centralized system.”<sup>156</sup>

In short, for the capitalist system to function, the money earned by workers in exchange of their labor and the money earned by the self-reproduction of financial capital must be presented as the same money. It is important that money is perceived as a homogeneous whole, despite the disparity between the two: one that is immediately socialized through its exchange value to commodities, and the other concerning the value of money itself. It needs to be assured that money existing as numbers and balances is socialized, and transformed into the means of payment. The convertibility of two moneys seems to be secured by the amount of debt created by the commercial banks. However, the law that governs the creation of money is different from that which applies to the productive process and commodity exchange. The value of money as purchasing power in the latter is subject to the former. As Deleuze and Guattari note, “There is no common measure between the value of the enterprises and that of the labor capacity of wage earners” (AO 230/277). We may say that what is dissimulated is not only the dualism between the two kinds of money but the asymmetry in power between wage earners and financial capitalists.

### **1.3 The power of financial capital: Fictitious capital**

If Brunhoff emphasized the necessary interdependency of the two forms of money and the precariousness of the value of money in the system of credit, Deleuze focuses more on the power relation involved in the dualism. In the lecture given in 1971, he claims that

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<sup>156</sup> Brunhoff, *L'offre de monnaie*, 126.

the fundamental duality of money indicates the difference in power, which refers back to what he said in AO about the difference between money that goes into the wage earner's pocket and the money that goes in and out of banks. He says, even when we make it seem that one can be converted into the other, "it does not matter because it does not change anything about their difference in nature. They do not carry the same power at all. One is indeed a sign of economic power, the other, not at all – it is, to the letter, the sign of impotence of wage earners; one defines the structure of financing, the other defines a whole of the means of payment."<sup>157</sup> That is, money as purchasing power is subordinated to the power of financial capital that concerns the creation and destruction of money.

### **Creation of Money by Banks: Money Multiplier**

What makes money as means of payment "impotent (powerless)"? What results in the difference in power? What makes the operations of power in the financial capitalism complex is that the antagonism between classes –bourgeoisie and proletariat, capitalists and workers, etc.–, which was crucial in Marx's critique of capitalism, seems much less obvious in the capitalism in its current form. It appears that anyone can participate in finance markets in the form of shares and stocks.

As a way to conceive the implications of the difference in power between financing and money as purchasing power in the current context of financial capitalism, I suggest that we consider the concept of 'money multiplier.' The monetary base (MB) we discussed above is also called 'high-powered' money since an increase in the MB leads to the creation of a multiple of the amount of money. Money multiplier shows how the adjustment made to MB

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<sup>157</sup> Gilles Deleuze, Lecture on December 21, 1971. Retrieved from <https://www.webdeleuze.com/textes/121>

can lead to the creation of money through loans made by commercial banks and financial institutions.

For example, we have Bank A and Bank B, each of which has \$100,000 in deposits and no excess reserves. Both of them have \$90,000 in loans. Let us suppose Customer X deposits \$1,000 in Bank A. Since the reserve ratio set by the Fed is 10%, Bank A must keep \$100 in reserve and makes \$900 in loans. Bank A has \$101,000 in deposits and \$90,900 in loans. In this way, the Bank A creates \$900, which did not exist before. Below is the amount added to Bank A's balance sheet:

Bank A	
Assets	Liabilities
<hr/>	
Reserves \$100	Deposits \$1,000
Loans \$ 900	

Let's say Bank A loans \$900 to Customer Y, who deposits the money at her account with Bank B. As \$900 is added to the balance of Y's account, Bank B's total deposit goes up to \$100,900. It can then loan out 90% of the new deposit amount \$900, \$810 to Customer Z, creating an additional \$810 of money. As this circuit of deposit and loan is repeated, more money is created as below:

Original deposit =	\$1,000
Bank A lending =	\$ 900 [ $\$1,000 \times 0.9$ ]
Bank B lending =	\$ 810 [ $\$ 900 \times 0.9$ ]
Bank C lending =	\$ 729 [ $\$ 810 \times 0.9$ ]
...	
<hr/>	
Total money supply increased = \$10,000 <sup>158</sup>	

Here we see that an increase of \$1,000 in the deposit generates \$10,000 of money over time.<sup>159</sup> Money multiplier is “the amount of money the banking system generates with each

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<sup>158</sup> Example modified; “Money Multiplier,” in N. Gregory Mankiw, *Principles of Macroeconomics* (Mason: South-Western Cengage Learning: 2008), 329-330.

dollar of reserves.”<sup>160</sup> If  $R$  is a reserve ratio, money multiplier is:  $\frac{1}{R}$ . In this example,  $R$  is  $\frac{1}{10}$ , thus the money multiplier is 10. “The higher the reserve ratio, the less of each deposit banks loan out, and the smaller the money multiplier.”<sup>161</sup>

$$\text{Money supply} = \text{Monetary base} \times \text{Money multiplier}$$

The money multiplier shows that the central bank’s control over money supply relies on the amount of loans that commercial banks and other depository institutions give out to customers. Also, we see that how bank credit as financial capital represented as the circuit M-M’ expands exponentially over time, without necessarily being converted into exchange money, or put into the production process. The newly generated money as loans, while added to the total amount of debt, potentially earns the banks interest, the surplus value of capital itself. Deleuze and Guattari call money created by banks, “an instantaneous creative flow that the banks create spontaneously as a debt owing to themselves, a creation *ex nihilo*” (AO 237/286). As the prices of other commodities, the value of money as purchasing power is determined by the supply (and demand) of money through the creation and destruction of money. Thus, Deleuze says that trying to compare money as purchasing power and money as structure of financing on the same measure is like trying to measure astronomical distances in centimeters.<sup>162</sup>

### **Interest-Bearing Capital (M-M’): Filiative Capital and Debt**

Deleuze and Guattari consider this self-expanding capital as a defining element of financial capitalism. In *Anti-Oedipus*, they quote Marx’s remark on the M-M’ movement: “instead of

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<sup>159</sup> There are assumptions in this calculation; we assumed that people deposit all of their money in the banks and that banks loan out the maximum amount of money without keeping any excess reserves.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid. 330.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

<sup>162</sup> Gilles Deleuze, Lecture on December 21, 1971. Retrieved from <https://www.webdeleuze.com/textes/121>

simply representing the relations of commodities, it [money] enters now, so to say, into relations with itself. It differentiates itself as original value from itself as surplus-value; as the father differentiates himself qua the son” (Marx, Ch.4 The general formula of capital, *Capital* p.256) (AO 227/273). From this idea of self-differentiating capital, they derive the concept of ‘filiative capital.’ Deleuze and Guattari claim, “the capitalist machine begins when capital ceases to be a capital of alliance to become a filiative capital. Capital becomes filiative when money begets money” (ibid.). We will return to this idea of financial capital in its self-differentiation shortly, in the following section.

Let us note that on the other side of this expansion of capital in the credit system, we have the expansion of *debt*; whenever new money is created by commercial banks, new debt is introduced to economy.<sup>163</sup> When the credit-debt relation implies the obligation for repayment with interest, debt claims become an object of trade and form a market of its own. Even if the mortgage loan you take out is used as exchange money for your house (thus not necessarily a form of financial investment), the newly originated mortgage of yours is sold to and traded between investors (such as pension funds, mutual funds, insurance companies, etc.) as an asset in the secondary mortgage market. Then it becomes part of the circuit of financial capital that generates surplus value of its own.

Based on the dualism between exchange money and credit money, and the idea of financial capital, Deleuze says that not only is there a use of money that concerns solely the generation of money itself, but also it has become the primary use of money. If financing is

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<sup>163</sup> In a report called “Money Creation in the Modern Economy” (*Quarterly Bulletin* Q1, 2014), three economists from the Bank of England’s Monetary Analysis Directorate stated that money is created as ‘debt.’ They stated that most common assumptions about banking practices are wrong. It is not that banks lend out household savings to consumers or entrepreneurs. Rather, they create money by making loans. Banks are not only intermediaries but also the creators of deposit money. As they note, “[w]hen a bank makes a loan, it simultaneously creates a matching deposit in the borrower’s bank account, thereby creating new money.” The central banks determine the quantity of loans and deposits not by controlling the quantity of central bank money, but by setting interest rates.

what ultimately determines the flow of capital, and if it is no longer regulated by the law of exchange, we need to redefine monetary movements accordingly, based on financialization. Thus Deleuze suggests that economic relations under the condition of financial capitalism are understood in terms of an asymmetrical power relation, debtor-creditor relationship, rather than exchange. He writes, “there are no forms of exchange, there are no forms of equivalence. [...] There is a whole circuit of debt that emerges from the circulation of its finite elements.”<sup>164</sup>

Deleuze and Guattari observe that the systemic structure and the desire of economic subjects are interrelated: “In a sense, it is the bank that controls the whole system and the investment of desire” (AO 230/276). According to them, it is the dissimulation that “ensures the Desire of the most disadvantaged creature [by the system] will invest with all its strength, irrespective of any economic understanding or lack of it, the capitalist social field as a whole” (AO 229/276). They write,

Who is alienated? [...] one no longer knows who is alienated or who does the alienating. Who steals? Certainly not the finance capitalist as the representative of the great instantaneous creative flow, which is not even a possession and has no purchasing power. Who is robbed? Certainly not the worker who is not even bought, since the reflux or salary distribution creates the purchasing power, instead of presupposing it. [...] For everything is then based on the disparity between two kinds of flows, as in the fathomless abyss where profit and surplus value are engendered: the flow of merchant capital’s economic force and the flow that is derisively named “purchasing power” – a flow made truly impotent that represents the absolute impotence of the wage earner as well as the relative dependence of the industrial capitalist. This is money and the market, capitalism’s true police (AO 238-239/287).

Here they seem to suggest that the dissimulation with regard to the power of moneys serve to mask the profound gap between finance capitalists and wage earners. As noted earlier, antagonism between economic classes is not conspicuous in financial capitalism, and it is

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<sup>164</sup> Gilles Deleuze, Lecture on March 7, 1972. Retrieved from <https://www.webdeleuze.com/textes/160>



because the class distinction has been replaced by the distinction between two kinds of money. As Jason Read points out, money as the common object and symbol to both financial capitalists and workers introduces “the condition for the incorporation of desire into capitalism. Money extends the illusion that we all participate in the system as equals; the dollars you and I earn are the same dollars that the wealthy invest to make billions.”<sup>165</sup>

Deleuze and Guattari’s observation on the dissimulation is interesting if we consider it with respect to our perception of economic reality. A recent study on American public’s assessments of economic mobility<sup>166</sup> shows that there is an overall overestimation of upward social mobility. Davidai and Gilovich demonstrate that “[p]articipants vastly overestimated the amount of upward mobility, estimating a 43% likelihood of a person born into the poorest quintile rising to the top three quintiles – a value significantly higher than the actual 30% chance of this happening.”<sup>167</sup> Relatedly, another study shows that Americans broadly underestimated the actual level of wealth inequality. Respondents believed that the top quintile holds 59% of the wealth when it is in fact 84%.<sup>168</sup> The power of financial capital seems to lie not only in its self-expansion independently of exchange money but also in the power to mask its function in the system.

## **2. Force of time: Temporal Structure of Debt**

We have seen in the first section that the predominant form of monetary movement in contemporary capitalism is found in the structure of financing rather than exchange. By

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<sup>165</sup> Jason Read, “The Age of Cynicism,” in *Deleuze and Politics* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008), 139-159, 153.

<sup>166</sup> Shai Davidai and Thomas Gilovich, “Building a More Mobile America – One Income Quintile at a Time,” in *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (2015), 60-71.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid. 63.

<sup>168</sup> Michael Norton and Dan Ariely, “Building a Better America – One Wealth Quintile at a Time,” in *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (2011), 9-12.

comparing the power of money in the C-M-C' circuit with the M-M' circuit, Deleuze and Guattari show that credit money holds the true economic power that predicts the movement of exchange money. In what follows, we will look at the temporality immanent to financial capital through the concepts in economic theory and a philosophical analysis of interest and debt. I hope to show how time under financial capitalism gets subordinated to monetary movement, and how this 'monetized time' comes into play in the production of indebted subjects.

## **2.1 Time value of money: Time subordinated to monetary movement**

Much literature has been published on how time under the capitalist mode of production is conceived in terms of labor time, thus as a quantified time.<sup>169</sup> Here we will place the focus on the circulation of financial capital, shown in the M-M' circuit, following Deleuze and Guattari. The flow of capital can by no means be separated from the social production, but as we have seen, it carries the power to determine the value of money itself, including wages.

### **Time Value of Money**

Financial capital is money used for investment rather than purchase, provided by lenders for interest. Deleuze does not refer to this, but the concept of 'Time Value of Money (TVM)' in economic theory will be helpful for our consideration of the relationship between time and financial capital. The TVM theory, considered to be central in financial management, suggests that the value of money is determined by time, taking account of

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<sup>169</sup> See, for instance, Moishe Postone, *Time, Labor, and Social Domination: A Reinterpretation of Marx's Critical Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); and E.P. Thompson, "Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism," *Past and Present*, No.38 (Dec., 1967): 56-97; Peter Osborne, "Marx and the philosophy of time," *Radical Philosophy* 147 (Jan.& Feb. 2008).

interest.<sup>170</sup> It concerns the so-called ‘inherent monetary value of time.’ The TVM formula consists of the ideas such as the present value (PV), future value (FV), and interest rate (i); the future value of money equals the present value multiplied by 1+interest rate to the  $n$  power. Here  $n$  stands for the number of time periods.

$$FV = PV \times (1+i)^n$$

In the M-M’ movement, according to this formula, money generates itself by repeating its present value to the ‘ $n$ th’ power, that is, over time. The TVM is supposed to show two things: first, the value of money decreases over time. A hundred dollar today is worth more than a hundred dollar in a year, since it can earn interest over time when invested. Second, it shows that time is believed to produce monetary value, as the circulation of financial capital repeats.

As we have seen in the earlier chapters, time for Deleuze is a vehicle through which difference is produced. We said that repetition in time cannot be a return of the same, but a movement of differentiation; time as a whole repeats its movement of self-differentiation while undergoing qualitative change. Deleuze’s critique of time subordinated to movement is aimed at the substance-based notion of time. Rather than talking about time as a measure of the movement of individual substances, he suggests that we understand time as a force by which everything is subject to produce itself anew. Time liberated from movement reveals an ‘ontological renewability’ of all that is subject to time.

Here in TVM, however, repetition in time necessarily generates difference in *quantity*, thus a repetition of quantitative difference. In fact, in the beginning of *Difference and*

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<sup>170</sup> Pamela P. Drake and Frank J. Fabozzi, *Foundations and Applications of the Time Value of Money* (Hoboken, N.J.: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2009), 3-6.

*Repetition*, Deleuze discusses the difference between repetition (repetition that generates difference) and generality (repetition of the same) in economic terms: “Repetition as a conduct and as a point of view concerns non-exchangeable and non-substitutable singularities. [...] If exchange is the criterion of generality, theft and gift are those of repetition. There is, therefore, an economic difference between the two” (DR 1/7).

According to Deleuze, exchange is a transaction between things of equivalent value, thus substitutable, whereas gift and theft are based upon asymmetrical relations or irreplaceability. Repetition within the framework of financial capitalism seems to be the circulation of capital that multiplies itself over time. This circulation is limitless since its motive is not qualitative difference but quantitative difference between M and M’.

With regard to the circulation of finance capital in the M-M’ circuit, Marx says, unlike the qualitative difference between C and C’ in the C-M-C’ circuit, “the extremes M, M are quantitatively different, even if not qualitatively. This quantitative difference presupposes the exchange of non-equivalents.”<sup>171</sup> The accumulation of capital through the M-M’ circuit also differs from the creation of surplus value through production. According to Marx, the identity of surplus value and surplus labor sets a qualitative limit to the accumulation of capital. That is, the total working day sets the limit of how much labor can be exploited. But “if surplus-value is conceived in the irrational form of interest, the limit is only quantitative, and beggars all fantasy.”<sup>172</sup>

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<sup>171</sup> Karl Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, trans. N.I. Stone (Chicago: Charles H. Kerr & Company, 1913), 163.

<sup>172</sup> Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy* Vol.3, trans. Ben Fowkes (New York: Penguin Books, 1992), 523.

## The power of time: the self-generation of capital

Here we observe an interesting parallel between the notion of time understood as self-differentiation and the self-expansion of financial capital. Considering the operation of money noted above, it is perhaps not hyperbolic to say that under financial capitalism, what carries the power to differentiate from itself is capital, rather than time. When time serves to increase interest on borrowed capital, its creative force is taken over by the generative power of capital. Let us consider the concept of interest, which gives time to multiply monetary value, and potentially ‘monetizes’ time itself. Marx has wittily describes the power of time with regard to interest-bearing capital, quoting Price: “Money bearing compound interest increases at first slowly. But, the rate of increase being continually accelerated, it becomes in some time so rapid, as to mock all the powers of the imagination. One penny, put out at our Saviour’s birth to 5 percent compound interest, would, before this time, have increased to a greater sum, than would be contained in a hundred and fifty millions of earths, all solid gold.”<sup>173</sup> With interest, capital takes a life of its own, in its exponential growth over time.

Speaking of life, let us recall that Deleuze and Guattari characterize the self-differentiation of financial capital in terms of *filiation*, the metaphor of which comes from Marx’s remarks on the M-M’ circuit. We see that Marx discusses interest in terms of generation. He writes in the section ‘Interest-Bearing Capital’ in the Volume 3 of *Capital*, “[l]ike the growth of trees, so the generation of money (τόκος) seems a property of capital in this form of money capital.”<sup>174</sup> He notes that the Greek word for interest, ‘τόκος’ literally means ‘birth’ or ‘what has been born.’ As Éric Alliez notes, “τόκος, interest, whose root *tek-* evokes the son being called by the name of the father, cuts itself off from the order of *phusis*

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<sup>173</sup> Ibid. 519.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid. 517.

and of natural reproduction to become the symbol of a monstrous filiation.”<sup>175</sup> The most aberrant movement of capital, in its insistent quantitative expansion, resists the creative force of time as the production of qualitative difference.

Our discussion of the time of capital leads us to bring together Deleuze’s conception ‘time as an empty form’ and Marx’s idea of capital as ‘money form without content.’ Marx calls money lent to expand and accumulate its quantitative value ‘fictitious capital,’ distinguishing it from money borrowed or lent for other purposes. He says, “capital appears immediately in this form [interest-bearing capital], unmediated by the production and circulation processes. [...] Instead of the actual transformation of money into capital, we have here only the form of this devoid of content.”<sup>176</sup> Marx calls this particular kind of M-M’ circulation in the credit system, ‘money form without content.’ It is fictitious in that the creation of money, as seen in our discussion of money multiplier, does not have any physical substance. The bank’s capital basically consists of liabilities, i.e., claims and IOUs issued by companies and households: “The greater part of banker’s capital is therefore purely fictitious and consists of claims (bills of exchange) and shares (drafts on future revenues).”<sup>177</sup> We may relate the notion of financial capital as money form without content to Deleuze’s definition of time as an empty form in the third synthesis.<sup>178</sup> As time as an empty form in Deleuze denotes the idea of time liberated from movement, capital seems to

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<sup>175</sup> Éric Alliez, *Capital Times: Tales from the Conquest of Time*, trans. George van den Abbeele (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), xvii.

<sup>176</sup> *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, 516.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid. 600.

<sup>178</sup> Drawing on Berthoud who sees *chrematistic* exchange as an exchange between different moments of time, thus an exchange that gives a price to time (Arnaud Berthoud, *Aristote et l’argent*, Maspero, 1981, 78), Alliez claims that *chrematistics* is a question of time, specifically the exchange value of time, freed from the movements that it was measuring (Éric Alliez, *Capital Times: Tales from the Conquest of Time*, trans. George van den Abbeele (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 12-13). He argues that *chrematistics* is, in Deleuze’s terms, a pure order of time, time that gets unhinged. “If money bears within itself an ineffaceable debit, it is because time, converted into the money form, is discovered as an empty form, a pure order of time, quantitative and differential, measurable and coinable, which nothing can come to fill” (Ibid. 13).

be liberated from commodity exchange in its empty form. Under the structure of financing, time serves to measure the self-expanding movement of financial capital, thus becomes subordinate to capital. I will elaborate further on this point in Section 3.2, where the synthesis of the future is discussed in relation to the time of capital.

But time alone does not earn financial capitalists interest. The circulation of financial capital takes a formation of the social relation, that is, debtor-creditor relationship. The perpetual movement of self-expanding financial capital is fueled by the cycle of debt multiplication. If the 'power' of time is exercised in its generation of difference in monetary value, as we said above, it would have radically different effects on the debtor and the creditor. Put in Deleuze's terms, the M-M' circuit of capital, as it repeats, reproduces the asymmetry between debtor and creditor.<sup>179</sup> I argue that this asymmetrical power relation introduces a new temporal structure to the subjects of capitalism; first, subordinated to monetary movements, time that is supposed to bring about an asymmetrical synthesis between past and future in the present only results in the asymmetry between the accumulation of capital on the one side and the multiplication of debt on the other. Moreover, this temporality derived from the circulation of capital seems to have become a dominant structure of time in contemporary capitalism. In the following section, I will demonstrate the temporality of the indebted, which is a general condition that most of the subjects in the current economic system are subjected to in the forms of credit, mortgage, and loan.

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<sup>179</sup> Lazzarato also highlights this in his reading of Deleuze and Guattari: "There is no equality (of exchange) underlying social relations, but rather an asymmetry of debt/credit, which precedes, historically and theoretically, that of production and wage labour" (Maurizio Lazzarato, *The Making of Indebted Man* (Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2012) 11).

## 2.2 Debt and Memory

In her reading of Marx, Brunhoff observes that the system of credit introduces certain temporality to economic activities: “[c]redit introduces the notion of time (i.e., the amount of time that elapses between C and M if the commodity buyer does not immediately pay the seller in hard cash).”<sup>180</sup> She notes that credit constitutes the monetary relationship’s temporal manifestation. When there is an interval in time between the moment where a commodity-owner is ready to sell and the moment where another commodity-owner is ready to buy, “[t]he seller sells an existing commodity, the buyer buys as the mere representative of money, or rather as the representative of future money. The seller becomes a creditor, the buyer becomes a debtor.”<sup>181</sup>

If being in debt is a temporal condition, how can it be characterized? On an empirical level, time is immediately perceived by the indebted as that which multiplies the amount of debt. They may feel bound to their past debt obligations that restrain their decisions for the future. They may also feel that they do not have ownership of ‘time to come.’ But more importantly, the promise of future repayment they make affects their experience of time on a more profound level, what we may equate with subconscious or transcendental conditions. In making promises to pay back, one is supposed to create a *memory* of the fact of indebtedness and must hold to it. Memory is crucial for establishing and maintaining a debtor-creditor relationship.<sup>182</sup> So, in this section we will look at the role of memory in the temporal experience of the indebted, which will prepare us for the discussion of

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<sup>180</sup> Suzanne de Brunhoff, ‘Marx’s Contribution to the Search for a Theory of Money,’ in *Marx’s Theory of Money: Modern Appraisals*, edited by Fred Moseley (Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 211.

<sup>181</sup> Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy* Vol.1, trans. Ben Fowkes (New York: Penguin Books, 1992), 268.

<sup>182</sup> Margaret Atwood also said famously, “Without memory there is no debt” (*Payback: Debt and the Shadow Side of Wealth*, 81).



subjectification under financial capitalism in the following chapter. Once we establish the relation of memory to debtor's conscience, we will be able to relate the concepts of memory and forgetting that we have analyzed in the production of subject formation to the temporality of capital.

For Deleuze's discussion of debt and memory, we need to go back to his early work, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*. Here Deleuze comments on the debtor-creditor relationship, anticipating his writings on financial capital that were published a decade later. In *Genealogy of Morals*, Nietzsche shows how the moral principle of 'guilt [*Schuld*]' derived its origin from the materialistic idea of 'debt [*Schulden*]' in the history of morality in the Western tradition. He notes that the issue here is that "a memory had to be made for those who promised."<sup>183</sup> Deleuze emphasizes that this memory is not simply remembrance or a recollection of the past, but a memory straining toward the future. In his terms, it is a 'forgetting of forgetting.'<sup>184</sup> By making promises for repayment, the indebted bind themselves to the past, not only in the moment but from that moment onwards; they need to remember not only that they are in debt, but also that they repay on time. In this sense, this faculty of memory is no longer a function of the past, but a function of the future. It is not the memory of the sensibility but of the will (NP 134/209). It is the "commitment to the future and memory of the future itself (*engagement de l'avenir, souvenir du futur lui-même*)" (ibid.) that makes a man capable of promising and of making use of the future. To put it another way, the creditor, in lending money, expects to have control over the debtor's future. Nietzsche writes,

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<sup>183</sup> Friedrich W. Nietzsche, *Genealogy of Morals and Ecce Homo*, trans. Walter Kaufmann and R.J. Hollingdale (Vintage Books: New York, 1967), 64.

<sup>184</sup> In *AO*, Deleuze reiterates this point: "it is a matter of creating a memory for man; and man, who was constituted by means of an active faculty of forgetting (*oubli*), by means of a repression of biological memory, must create an *other* memory, one that is collective, a memory of words (*paroles*) [...]" (AO 144) Deleuze and Guattari call Nietzsche's *Genealogy* the "great book of modern ethnology" in that it interprets primitive economy in terms of debt and the debtor-creditor relationship, rather than exchange (AO 190).

to impress repayment as a duty, an obligation upon his own conscience, the debtor made a contract with the creditor and pledged that if he should fail to repay he would substitute something else that he “possessed,” something he had control over; for example, his body or his wife or his freedom or even his life.<sup>185</sup>

What Deleuze finds interesting here is that Nietzsche conceives the debtor-creditor relation as the archetype of social relation. It is an essential form of relation in which man forms habits, learn to obey laws and reinforce conscience. The techniques of memory include punishment, where pain is given as the equivalent of a forgetting, a promise not kept (“injury caused = pain undergone”).

Once the debtor develops conscience,<sup>186</sup> that is to say, when she becomes ‘capable’ of making herself feel guilty by reflecting on the fact of indebtedness, she no longer needs the creditor exercising power over her from outside. Thus Deleuze in the essay “Postscript on the Societies of Control” compares the workings of power in the 19th century capitalism and in contemporary capitalism, characterizing the former as the spaces of enclosure and the latter as the open circuits of the bank. That is, in contemporary capitalism, “[m]an is no longer man enclosed, but man in debt.”<sup>187</sup> As the indebted become bound to the past, they get closed off from certain possibilities of the future. A subject finds herself passively subject to the temporality determined by the condition of indebtedness, and yet she also actively reproduces and imposes it on herself by the feeling of guilt.

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<sup>185</sup> Nietzsche, *Genealogy of Morals and Ecce Homo*, 64.

<sup>186</sup> Guilty conscience is not directly caused by punishment, but originated from the development of what Nietzsche calls the ‘instinct for freedom’ under a particular condition. When this instinct is repressed by punishment, it turns back on its possessor. That is, one develops internally a critical view of oneself. This ‘internalization of man’ and the emergence of bad conscience are related to the condition for the production of subjectivity. We will come back to this movement of ‘turning back’ or recoiling later in this chapter.

<sup>187</sup> Gilles Deleuze, “Postscript on the societies of control,” *October*, Vol. 59 (Winter, 1992): 3-7, 6

Nietzsche was not the only one who has observed the ‘moralization’ of debt. Marx, in his early essay, ‘On James Mill’ (1844), also talks about how human morality has become an article of commerce in the credit system and how the moral concepts of good and bad are translated into the ability and inability to pay back (solvency and insolvency): “Credit is the economic judgment on the morality of man.” He notes that in the system of credit, it seems as if man returns to human relations since it presupposes a mutual trust, but it only appears so on the surface. In the credit relationship, one is expected to estimate the value of another person in money. By a good man, one understands, a man who is able to pay. “Money is not transcended in man inside the credit relationship but man himself has been changed into money or money become incarnate in him.”<sup>188</sup> Marx continues,

[...] the life of the poor man and his talents and activity serve the rich man as a guarantee of the repayment of the money lent. That means, therefore, that all the social virtues of the poor man, the content of his vital activity, his existence itself, represent for the rich man the reimbursement of his capital with the customary interest (ibid.).

Here the credit-debt relation goes far beyond the economic relationship, and concerns one’s moral and social existence. As Lazzarato points out, in the credit relation “[t]he content of money here is not labor but existence, individuality, and human morality; the material of money is not labor time, but the time of existence.”<sup>189</sup>

The moralization of debt that both Marx and Nietzsche observe directs us toward the problem of conscience that follows the formation of memory. Memory is crucial in the social relation of debt in that a debtor needs to recognize debt as binding obligation for her

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<sup>188</sup> Karl Marx, “On James Mill,” in *Karl Marx: Selected Writings*, edit. David McLellan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 124-133, 124.

<sup>189</sup> Maurizio Lazzarato, *The Making of the Indebted Man: An Essay on the Neoliberal Condition*, trans. Joshua David Jordan (Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2012), 60. Lazzarato argues that neoliberalism as a debt economy appropriates and exploits both chronological time (labor time) and non-chronological time as decision, that is, the power of money as financing structure in its ability to prescribe and order, specifically the “possibilities for choices and decisions with regard to the future” (84).

acts in the future, even when her instinct tells her to betray it. Punishment as a technique of memory does not effectuate directly guilty conscience, but it establishes a condition in which ‘the instinct of freedom’ turns inward. In the transition from debt to guilt, there is an internalization of debt in one’s conscience. In addition, what Deleuze calls ‘the memory of the will’ requires the idea of the self that endures over time. The activity of the ‘I’ – “I will,” “I shall do this” – ensuring the consistency between one’s acts with the promise made develops a sort of reflexivity: the formation of conscience. I will discuss further the relationship between this memory of the will and the production of subjectivity in the following chapter.

In this chapter we have examined the temporality characteristic of financial capitalism. First we looked at the movement of capital as the flow of financing as opposed to the simple circulation of money as a means of payment. We said that the dualism between two kinds of money and the fictitious nature of their convertibility are dissimulated by banks, the role of which is to convert financial capital into loans and payment money. This shows that the monetary movement in the current economic system needs to be characterized in terms of self-generating capital. In the second section, we have discussed the notion of time subordinated to the movement of financial capital through the TVM theory, which is based on the idea, ‘inherent monetary value of time.’ It was noted that this monetized time shapes the debtor’s temporal experience quite differently from the creditor’s. So we looked at how the obvious ‘power’ of time in its multiplication of debt is internalized by the indebted in Deleuze’s reading of Nietzsche. In the next chapter, we will turn to Deleuze’s notion of subjectification, with which we articulate the specific process of the subject formation through debt. We will examine the role of memory and forgetting in

Deleuze's account of subjectivity under the condition of indebtedness that instigates a temporal control over one's future.

#### **IV. The Production of Melancholic Subjects: Subjectification through Debt**

If the subject is produced through time (Chapter II) and if time is subordinated to the movement of capital (Chapter III), there must be a form of subjectivity born out of the temporality of capital. This form of subjectivity should be defined in terms of a specific temporality characteristic of capitalism and the process through which one internalizes it. We described the temporality of capitalism in terms of debtor-creditor relationship earlier, which is founded upon a particular kind of memory that enables the possibility of a promise, the ‘memory of the future.’ This last chapter will be dedicated to developing further Deleuze’s theory of subjectification by giving an account of the subject formation under the condition of indebtedness. Specifically, we will relate the ‘memory of the future’ back to the notion of virtual Memory that Deleuze takes to be ‘time as subjectification.’

One of the important goals of this chapter will be to advance Deleuze’s concept of subjectification by complementing it with Judith Butler’s theory of subject formation. Specifically, we will look at her reading of Nietzsche’s concept of bad conscience and Foucault’s notion of subjectification, which are, I shall argue, crucial to understanding the process of subjectification in Deleuze. Also, Butler’s emphasis on the mechanisms of power in the constitution of the subject and its ‘melancholic’ operation will be vital for our analysis of the subjectification process through debt. After establishing a kinship between debt and melancholia, we will revisit Deleuze’s passive synthesis to give a temporal account of the production of indebted subjects.

## 1. The Problem of Subjectification in Deleuze

### 1.1 Foucault-Deleuze Encounter: Power and Subject Formation

In his book on Foucault, Deleuze develops the Foucauldian concept of subjectification (*subjectivation*) in his terms. As in his other works on various thinkers in the history of philosophy, Deleuze's reading of Foucault should not be seen as a mere commentary, but as part of his own system of thought with reinvented concepts. For instance, Deleuze creatively connects the dots between concepts such as folding/doubling, subjectification and Memory; he says, "[s]ubjectification is created by folding" (F 104/111), and "[t]he folding or doubling is itself a Memory [*le plissement lui-même, le redoublement est une Mémoire*]" (F 107/114). Finally, he writes, "time as subject, or rather subjectification is called memory" (F 107/115). In the following, we will examine what this conceptual linkage entails.

Subjectification is a translation for the French word *subjectivation*, which is also translated as 'subjectivation,' or as 'subjectivization' although less frequently. For Foucault, subjectification concerns the production of subjectivity in relation to power. He defines the notion in his last interview as follows:

I will call subjectification [*subjectivation*] the procedure by which one obtains the constitution of a subject, or more precisely, of a subjectivity which is of course only one of the given possibilities of organization of a self-consciousness.<sup>190</sup>

In Foucault's system, subjectification is to be distinguished from 'subjection' that translates the French words *assujétissement* or *sujétion*, which seem to highlight the passivity of the

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<sup>190</sup> Michel Foucault, "The Return of Morality," trans. Thomas Levin and Isabelle Lorenz, in *Michel Foucault: Politics, Philosophy, Culture: Interviews and Other Writings, 1977–1984*, ed. Lawrence D. Kritzman (London: Routledge, 1988), 253. Translation modified.

subject with respect to power.<sup>191</sup> Some argue that subjection (*assujettissement*) in Foucault has both senses of the word ‘subject,’ that is, being passively subjected and actively self-constituting subject, whereas subjectification only refers to the active aspect.<sup>192</sup> The distinction will prove useful in our analysis down the road, but let us note for now that subjection and subjectification are inseparable given the productive nature of power, in addition to its regulatory operation; it not only subordinates the subject from outside, but also produces it from inside when internalized.

As John Marks points out, the Foucault-Deleuze relationship is defined through their position with regard to Nietzsche.<sup>193</sup> Deleuze sees Foucault’s discussion of subjectification as the legacy of Nietzsche; if the subject formation in Nietzsche concerns creating ways of existing and inventing new possibilities of life, Foucault developed it as a political issue, in its relation to the way power operates.<sup>194</sup> In what follows we will see how Deleuze draws on both Nietzsche and Foucault in advancing his conception of subjectification under capitalism.

### **Doubling and folding of the subject**

In the chapter on subjectification in *Foucault*, Deleuze argues that the theme that has always haunted Foucault was that of ‘the double.’ (F 97-98/105) ‘The double’ in the general sense indicates the inside/ interior and the outside/ exterior of the subject that constitute

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<sup>191</sup> For the distinction between subjectification and subjection in Foucault, see Sylvain Roux, “*Subjectivation, assujettissement et connaissance de soi chez Plotin et Foucault*,” 2008. Retrieved from [www.europhilosophie.eu/recherche](http://www.europhilosophie.eu/recherche).

<sup>192</sup> See for example, Mark G.E. Kelly, *The Political Philosophy of Michel Foucault* (New York and London: Routledge, 2010), 87-88.

<sup>193</sup> John Marks, *Gilles Deleuze: Vitalism and Multiplicity* (London: Pluto, 1998), 112-119.

<sup>194</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Negotiations: 1972-1990*, trans. Martin Joughin (New York: Zone Books, 1995), 117-118. Ansell-Pearson presents a similar view; the subject-power relation in Foucault is closely related to Nietzsche’s account in *Genealogy of Morals*. “The Significance of Michel Foucault’s Reading of Nietzsche” in *Nietzsche: A Critical Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), 13-30, 17.



subjectivity in their reciprocal determinations. Deleuze uses the terms ‘doubling’ and ‘folding’ interchangeably, both of which concern the problem of subject formation. He derives the idea of the double from Foucault’s book on Raymond Roussel, more specifically, from his comments on Roussel’s novel titled, *La Doublure*. In this piece, Roussel used the duality of language – the examples of which Foucault gives are a homonymic word play ‘jeunesse (youth)=genèse (genesis)’ and the approximation of ‘billard (billiard)=pillard (plunderer)’ – that “opens a chasm in the identity of language, a void that has to be revealed and at the same time filled.”<sup>195</sup> Foucault thinks that *La Doublure*, where the characters with cardboard faces play dual roles, shows the interplay between repetition and double meaning that runs through Roussel’s works. He writes: “The hollowness that opens within a word would not simply be a property of verbal signs, but a more basic ambiguity, perhaps even more dangerous: it would show that a word, like a gaudy cardboard face, hides what it duplicates [...] The double meaning of words would be like the repetition, by the mask on top, of the face. It reveals the same eclipse of being.”<sup>196</sup>

After identifying the ‘doubling’ as a key concept in Foucault’s theory of subjectification, Deleuze proceeds to relate it with a certain kind of memory: ‘absolute memory.’ He locates the idea also in Foucault’s book on Roussel:

From so many things without any social standing, from so many fantastic civic records, he [Leiris] slowly accumulates his own identity, as if within the folds of words there slept, with nightmares never completely extinguished, *an absolute memory*. These same folds Roussel parts with a studied gesture to find the stifling hollowness, the inexorable absence of being, which he disposes of imperiously to create forms without parentage or species.<sup>197</sup>

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<sup>195</sup> Michel Foucault, *Death and the Labyrinth: The World of Raymond Roussel*, trans. Charles Ruas (New York & London: Continuum, 2004), 19.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid. 20.

<sup>197</sup> Ibid. 21 (emphasis added.)

Here Foucault speaks of ways to reach the thought of ‘the Outside’ in Blanchot’s sense by comparing Roussel’s writing with Leiris’s. Unlike Leiris, who tries to grasp truth about what has occurred by slowly gathering various records, Roussel attempts to create radically new forms. In his comments on this passage, Deleuze contrasts Roussel’s search for death as a way to reach the Outside by undoing the doubling, with Leiris’s method of reinforcing the doublings and folds that forms an ‘absolute memory.’ (F 99/106) According to Deleuze, death and memory are the two forms of the double that Foucault has always oscillated between.

### **Absolute Memory and Forgetting**

However, Deleuze does not stop at commenting on Foucault’s idea of absolute memory, but takes an interesting turn; he ties it to his idiosyncratic notion of Memory. By shifting from the thought of ‘the outside’ – which Deleuze believes was the reason for the primacy of space over time in Foucault’s early work – to memory, he seems to change the focus from a spatial metaphor of the dynamic formation of subjectivity to the temporal structure of subjectification. In this regard, I agree with Ronald Bogue who argues that Deleuze uses Blanchot’s idea of the thought of the Outside to consider “the structure of time itself in the thought of the Outside, a structure framed in terms of an enfolding and unfolding of the pure becoming of the Outside that constitutes a memory (a folding) of forgetting (an unfolding).”<sup>198</sup> Drawing on Foucault’s reference to the aesthetic existence of the Greeks as the first instance of subject formation, Deleuze develops his own theory of time and subjectification:

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<sup>198</sup> Ronald Bogue, “Deleuze, Foucault, and the Playful Fold of the Self,” in *Deleuze’s Wake: Tributes and Tributaries* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004), 18, 57.

The folding or doubling is itself a Memory: the ‘absolute memory’ or memory of the outside, beyond the brief memory inscribed in strata and archives [...]. The aesthetic life of the Greeks had already essentially prompted a memory of the future, and very quickly the processes of subjectification were accompanied by writings that were real memories, ‘*hypomnemata*.’” (F 107/114-115, translation modified)

*Hypomnemata* is what is generated by *hypomnesis*, an externalizing technique of memory.

Foucault thought of *hypomnemata* as writing of self, and as a way of constituting oneself. For the Greeks, it is a tool for care of the self. This form of writing was not to say the unsaid but to “capture the already said, to collect what one has managed to hear or read, and for a purpose that is nothing less than the shaping of the self.”<sup>199</sup>

But what does the doubling have to do with Memory? Memory here is not the empirical sense of memory as the ability to remember or recall. It is the virtual, ontological memory that exceeds the limit of individual consciousness: absolute memory. As we saw in Chapter II, there is a doubling or a bifurcation of the present in the two-fold movement of the Memory cone. The present as the actualization of the virtual Memory involves two dimensions: actual present and coexisting levels of the pure past. Earlier I defined the subject as the locus of actualization of the virtual memory. The subject in the present is understood as a product of the interactions between the present self and the past selves. As Jay Lampert says, “when faced with an experience today, I run through one series of reactions that calls into play my eight-year-old self, and another my fifty-year-old self.”<sup>200</sup> When Deleuze says Memory is “the real name of the relation to oneself, or the affect on self by self,” (F 107/115) he means that the present is in constant interaction with the coexisting levels of virtual Memory, a product of which is the subject. It is in this sense that Ronald

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<sup>199</sup> Michel Foucault, “Self Writing” in *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth* (New York: The New Press, 1997), 207-221, 210-211.

<sup>200</sup> Lampert, *Simultaneity and Delay*, 169.

Bogue writes, “[t]his absolute memory resembles what Deleuze refers to elsewhere as a Bergsonian virtual past.”<sup>201</sup>

In our reading of Deleuze’s passive synthesis of time, we saw that this absolute, transcendental memory is a memory *with* forgetting, unlike empirical memory that is opposed to forgetting. Forgetting is the idea that allows us to understand how the *repetition* of the virtual memory, coexistent with the actual present, constitutes time as the future; the virtual, absolute memory repeats itself differently each time it repeats. The virtual memory is not opposed to forgetting, but the ‘forgetting of forgetting,’ where forgetting indicates the reconstitution of the memory in each present as the new. Deleuze writes,

Time becomes a subject because it is the folding of the outside and, as such, forces every present into forgetting, but preserves the whole of the past within memory: forgetting is the impossibility of return, and memory is the necessity of renewal (F 108 / 115).

In a similar vein, Leonard Lawlor, in his essay on philosophical archeology in Merleau-Ponty and Foucault, points out that the ‘absolute memory’ in Foucault is a new kind of memory that is “identical to forgetfulness.”<sup>202</sup> He argues that philosophical archeology’s investigation on the past is never for the sake of the past, but always for the future. Thus, this can be called ‘counter-memory’ in that it is opposed to the kind of memory that is tied to an individual consciousness, to the form of the present.

So far, we have seen that in Deleuze’s reading of the Foucauldian notion of subjectification is explained as a doubling or folding, which are intrinsically related – in Deleuze’s system of thought – to memory and forgetting. This is, I argue, consistent with the virtual memory with forgetting in Deleuze’s passive syntheses of time that constitutes a

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<sup>201</sup> Bogue, *Deleuze’s Wake*, 18.

<sup>202</sup> Leonard Lawlor, “The Chiasm and the Fold: An Introduction to the Philosophical Concept of Archeology,” in *Thinking Through French Philosophy* (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2003), 24-46, 45.

temporal structure for the production of the subject. He translates the doubling or folding, defined as the interiorization of the outside in Foucault, into temporal terms, as the relation of the self to self in Memory.

We will now return to our initial question regarding the subject formation in the current socio-economic system, namely, financial capitalism. What does the above account of subjectification tell us about the formation of subjectivity in social relations of power? Before we turn to Deleuze's later work on capitalism, let us take a quick look at the distinction between subjectification and subjection in his account of Foucault. Deleuze notes that the 'doubling' as the relation of the self to oneself discussed above becomes more complicated when power comes into play. Subjectification, as the process in which the subject both actively constitutes oneself in time and is passively determined by virtual memory, is interrupted by the mechanisms of power that *subjectivates*. Deleuze writes,

For the relation to oneself will not remain the private and folded zone [*la zone réservée et repliée*] of the free man, independent of all 'institutional and social system.' The relation to oneself will be understood in terms of power-relations [...] The fold therefore seems unfolded, and *the subjectification of the free man is transformed into subjection*: it is, on the one hand, 'the submission to another by control and dependence,' with all the processes of individualization and of modulation which power institutes, acting on the daily life and the interiority of those it calls its subjects; it is on the other hand 'the attachment (of each one) to one's own identity by conscience and knowledge [*connaissance*] of the self,' through all the techniques of moral and human sciences that will make up a knowledge [*savoir*] of the subject (F 103/110, translation modified, emphasis added).

In this passage, Deleuze talks about the transformation of subjectification into subjection. If the Greek's technique of the care of the self is an example of the Foucauldian subjectification, subjection is a process by which the subject is produced in its *subordination* to power. In the latter, the interiority of the subject as well as its relation to oneself is reconstituted by power, through internalization. As will be shown shortly, Deleuze does not

hold strictly the distinction between subjectification and subjection, but what the idea of subjection introduced to the “subjectification of the freeman” deserves a closer examination, especially with respect to the ‘doubling’ process.

## **1.2 Subjectification in *A Thousand Plateaus*: Capital as a point of subjectification**

“The principal strata binding human beings are the organism, significance and interpretation and subjectification and subjection” (MP 134/167).

In his later works written with Guattari, Deleuze speaks of subjectification in terms of doubling, but this time in a different context. His focus here is not so much on temporality, but the workings of power in the subject formation. In the chapter on different regimes of signs in *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari discuss the constitution of subjectivity in linguistic terms. For them, subjectification is the product of a collective assemblage characteristic of a certain regime of signs: post-signifying regime. Unlike the despotic, signifying regime where all significations circle back to an authority (despot), post-signifying regime produces coexisting points of subjectification that proceed in a linear fashion.

What is important, what makes the post-signifying passionate line a line of subjectification [*subjectivation*] or subjection [*assujettissement*], is the constitution, the doubling of the two subjects, and the recoiling of one into the other, of the subject of enunciation [*sujet d’énonciation*] into the subject of the statement [*sujet de l’énoncé*] (MP 129/162).

The subject of enunciation designates a subject of utterance, ‘the ego’ of the unconscious. It is “a function of a mental reality” determined by the point of subjectification concerned. It is the subject that is produced or revealed by discourse, rather than the subject that produces discourse. The subject of statement (enunciated) is ‘the I’ that is the subject of what is spoken about. It is ‘the I’ recognized by the self and by the others, “a subject bound to

statements in conformity with a dominant reality” (ibid.). The distinction between these two Lacanian terms, to simplify, concerns the gap between what a speech is meant to convey and what it signifies in a given context; when I say something, the meaning of what is said is always more than what it was intended to convey. Lacan’s example is the sentence ‘I am lying.’<sup>203</sup> If I say ‘I am lying,’ the subject of enunciation is telling the truth about lying. But the subject of the statement, ‘the I’ determined at the level of the statement, is lying. As Tamsin Lorraine points out, what makes a speech ‘make sense’ is not an individual subject, but the system of significance. In the same way, “[w]hat counts as a recognizable subject (to oneself as well as others) is dictated by systems of subjectification that determine a subject’s position vis-à-vis others.”<sup>204</sup> She notes that the operative statements in various social fields – statements concerning school, prison or the political system – form the elements of dominant reality.

According to Deleuze and Guattari, a point of subjectification can be anything – any object, event, or practices that make one a recognizable subject. For example, for a cinephile, a film (or films) is a point of subjectification. If I say ‘I am a cinephile,’ there is a film (films) that has become a point of departure, or a significant life event that eventually led me to identify myself as a person who is enthusiastic about films. What makes one call oneself a cinephile (a subject of enunciation) is a function of a particular mental reality determined by films. From the subject of enunciation, the subject of statement emerges. As soon as I utter the sentence, I am bound to the statements in conformity with the dominant reality, which my mental reality is part of, even when it seems opposed to it. That is to say, there is a

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<sup>203</sup> Jacques Lacan, *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan: The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis Book XI*, edit. Jacques-Alain Miller (W. W. Norton & Company, 1998), 139-140.

<sup>204</sup> Tamsin Lorraine, “Majoritarian,” *Deleuze Dictionary*, edit. Adrian Parr (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010), 153.

system of significance that determines what it means to be a cinephile whether I agree with it or not; I, as someone who lives in the United States in the early 2000s, might be able to convince you to believe that I am a cinephile without knowing any Portuguese filmmakers, but I would not likely be able to without knowing what 'Netflix' is, unless I have a good reason for it. That is, I do not become a cinephile by waking up one day and decide to be one, but by coming to be part of the culture. A subject's relation to film, as any other cultural product, is never only about an individual mind fascinated by films, but always also about the system of significance as well as the distribution system of cultural capital that one's appreciation of film is part of.

In this sense, Deleuze and Guattari define subjectification as the process in which one is constituted as a subject by the *doubling* of the subject of enunciation (ego, or the self) and the subject of statement (the I). Thus the process of subjectification is necessarily a social process that involves the relations of power. When they speak of the process of subjectification and subjection together in the above passage, they are considering the form of power operating immanently in the subject. A subject is always a doubled subject, always in the making in its relation to power.

There is no longer even a need for a transcendent center of power; power is instead immanent and melds with the 'real,' operating through normalization. A strange invention: as if in one form the doubled subject were the cause of the statements of which, in its other form, it itself is a part (MP 129-130/162).

Deleuze and Guattari note that the doubling of two subjects is the *recoiling* of one into the other. We can think of it as a practice that translates mental reality into dominant reality through various forms of education and normalization imposed on an individual, which, in turn, reconstitutes one's mental reality. Through the circular process of the doubling between 'the self' (subject of enunciation) and 'the I' (subject of statement), one becomes her



own 'legislator' that replaces the power exercised from outside. As Deleuze and Guattari point out, "the more you obey the statements of the dominant reality, the more in command you are as subject of enunciation in mental reality, for in the end, you are only obeying yourself! You are the one in command, in your capacity as a rational being. A new form of slavery is invented, namely, being slave to oneself, or to pure 'reason,' the Cogito" (MP 130/163). This is, according to them, not a question of linguistic operation, but an organization of power.

Subjectification as a regime of signs or a form of expression is tied to an assemblage, in other words, an organization of power that is already fully functioning in the economy, rather than superposing itself upon contents or relations between contents determined as real in the last instance. *Capital is a point of subjectification par excellence* (MP 130/163, emphasis added).

Here Deleuze and Guattari introduce capital as a preeminent point of subjectification. As Frédéric Rambeau observes, capitalism functions in the production of subjects by means of inscribing a 'subject function' – the enunciations or the signs by which the individuals are called to recognize themselves as subjects – in the economic infrastructure itself.<sup>205</sup> We may also consider 'the semiotic process of subjectification in capitalism,' the account of which was given by Guattari, together with Éric Alliez. Alliez and Guattari have further developed a concept of semiotic capitalism in their works on 'Integrated World Capitalism (IWC).'<sup>206</sup> Guattari regarded the problem of subjectification as that of the production of collective subjectivity (*une subjectivité de groupe*), thus as an intrinsically political issue.<sup>207</sup> He has advanced a theory of the production of subjectivity in his solo work, especially in *Chaosmosis*,

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<sup>205</sup> Frédéric Rambeau, "Deleuze, Guattari et les apories de la subjectivation politique," retrieved from <http://www.implications-philosophiques.org/actualite/une/deleuze-guattari-et-les-apories-de-la-subjectivation-politique-2/>

<sup>206</sup> Eric Alliez and Félix Guattari, "Capitalistic Systems, Structures and Processes," *The Guattari Reader*, edit. Gary Genosko (Oxford and Cambridge, Blackwell Publishing, 1996), 233-247.

<sup>207</sup> Félix Guattari, *Psychanalyse et Transversalité* (Paris: Maspero, 1972; La Découverte, 2003), 153.

where he emphasizes the plurality of subjectivity through his reading of Bakhtinian conception ‘polyphony.’<sup>208</sup>

The example of subjectification that I would like to look into is the one Deleuze gives in his essay “Postscript: on the societies of control,” published ten years later than *A Thousand Plateaus*. Here Deleuze describes the transition from what Foucault called ‘disciplinary societies’ to the current ‘societies of control,’ which he defines by a new form of power. He explains how the organization of power in the economy changes its form, using the example of salary. In the disciplinary societies, the factory used to function as a body with internal forces that strives for equilibrium between the highest possible production and the lowest possible wages, which constituted individuals as a single body (mass resistance). In the society of control, corporations operate on ‘salary according to merit’ that presents the rivalry as a motivational force that opposes individuals against one another. Power that used to manifest itself as spatial enclosure or confinement becomes ‘the voice in your head’ to compete and accomplish more. As Byung-Chul Han points out, this ‘imperative to achieve’ has become a new form of power that puts the subject into a battle with herself. Han describes this as a shift from disciplinary society (a society of ‘should’) to achievement society (a society of ‘can’); in a society that says, ‘nothing is impossible,’ it is solely your responsibility whether you succeed or not.<sup>209</sup>

In this section, we have examined the problem of subjectification in Deleuze, specifically in his work on Foucault and in *A Thousand Plateaus*. The key notion in the process of subject formation turns out to be ‘doubling,’ whether it is understood as absolute memory or the internalization of power relation. On the basis of Deleuze’s accounts of

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<sup>208</sup> Félix Guattari, *Chaosmosis: An Ethico-Aesthetic Paradigm*, trans. Paul Bains and Julian Pefanis (Sydney: Indiana University Press, 1995 [1992]).

<sup>209</sup> Byung-Chul Han, *The Burnout Society*, trans. Erik Butler (Stanford University Press, 2015), 11.

subjectification as Memory and as the organization of power in the capitalist system, I shall develop in the following a Deleuzian theory of subjectification in financial capitalism. I argue that the way power in financial capitalism functions is through the normalization of debt; by submitting oneself to a private relationship of debtor-creditor, one becomes subjected to a larger structure of power surrounding financial capital. The exercise of power on the subject would take the form of temporal control, namely, the internalization of the capitalist temporality. We will also see how Memory as the doubling of the subject functions in the production of indebted subjects.

## **2. Subjectification in the time of debt**

Let us note that although subjectification in Deleuze involves a necessary relation of the subject to power, this does not mean it is equated with the absolute subordination to power, which would leave the subject no possibility of resistance or freedom. The subject is produced in the process of doubling, that is, somewhere in between mental reality and dominant reality: A subject is free, but only to a certain extent. It seems to me that Deleuze's account of subjectification through time shows more explicitly how this process allows us freedom, or the ontological possibility to create oneself anew. With respect to time, the subject is in a passive relation, and it is the very passivity that leaves the subject free, permanently open for determinations. In the production of the subject through passive syntheses, 'the doubling' process comes down to the relation between the past and the present. Thus the problem of freedom concerns the following question: to what extent is the past repeated in the present in the constitution of subjectivity? If the second synthesis shows

that the past is virtually coexistent with any present moment, the third synthesis shows a radical renewability of the past in the present that marks the condition of the future.

Since our inquiry into the subject formation through the temporality of financial capital concerns a point of subjectification where time and power structure intersect, it is important to understand how the two accounts of subjectification can be translated into one another. With regard to the subjectification through power, I think the question about the repetition of the past in the present above becomes: To what extent is one subjected to power in the constitution of subjectivity? Accordingly, we may say that the condition of the future would correspond to political freedom, or what Deleuze and Guattari call ‘a line of flight.’<sup>210</sup> We will return to this point in Section 3.1.

What then, would it mean for temporality when subjectification is transformed into subjection? This question will be the key in our analysis of the subjectification through debt. I define the condition of indebtedness as ‘subjection,’ and see how the subjection to this form of financial obligation transforms the temporal condition of the debtor’s lived experience.

## **2.1 Debt as an instrument of power: From subjectification to subjection**

We ended the previous chapter on time subordinated to the movement of capital, by noting the inherent monetary value of time in the self-generation of financial capital and how this monetized time creates an asymmetry between the debtor and the creditor. We also saw that the dualism of money requires the convertibility of credit money into money

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<sup>210</sup> The concept Deleuze develops in relation to Foucault’s analytics of power – Deleuze differentiates it from the resistance to power in his letter to Foucault, “Desir et plaisir” (Gilles Deleuze, *Deux régimes de fous: Textes et entretiens, 1975-1995* (Paris: Minuit, 2003), 112-122, originally appeared in *Magazine littéraire*, 325 (1994 [1977]): 59-65); for a further discussion of the problem of agency and political virtues in Deleuze, see Fred Evans, “Deleuze’s Political Ethics: A Fascism of the New?,” *Deleuze Studies*, Vol.10 (No.1, 2016): 85-99.

as purchasing power and that the current economic system depends on the creation of money through the issuance of debts by commercial banks. The monetary system relies on debt, thus requires its subjects to be indebted. In this sense, we may say that debtors are put through the contradiction systemically resulted from the gaps between two kinds of money.

What is interesting about the debt-credit relationship as a social relation is its discreet mechanism or technique of power. As Lazzarato notes, “[c]redit or debt and their creditor-debtor relationship constitute specific relations of power that entail specific forms of production and control of subjectivity – a particular form of *homo economicus*, the ‘indebted man.’”<sup>211</sup> He brings the term ‘indebted man’ from Deleuze’s essay on the mechanism of power in the societies of control that says “[m]an is no longer man imprisoned, but indebted man.”<sup>212</sup> Entering into a debtor-creditor relation does not involve any spatial confinement – at least not immediately. Since the relation is established through a contract, it makes the subordination seem to be a ‘free’ choice. For those who are deprived of capital, debt even appears to be possibilities and potential accomplishments that would not otherwise be available for them. As Lazzarato points out, “[t]he power of debt leaves you free, and it encourages you and pushes you to act in such a way that you are able to honor your debts.”<sup>213</sup>

In addition to the questionable freedom with which borrowers enter into a contract, there is another factor that contributes to concealing the technique of power, specific to debt. It should be clear to us by now that the problem of debt is not a personal but a

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<sup>211</sup> Maurizio Lazzarato, *The Making of Indebted Man: An Essay on the Neoliberal Condition*. trans. Joshua David Jordan (Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2012), 30.

<sup>212</sup> “Man is no longer man imprisoned, but indebted man. It is true that capitalism has retained as a constant the extreme poverty of three quarters of humanity, too poor for debt, too numerous for confinement: control will not only have to face the dissipation of borders but with the population explosions in shanty towns or ghettos” (Deleuze, “Postscript on the societies of control,” *October*, Vol. 59 (Winter, 1992): 3-7, 6-7. translation modified).

<sup>213</sup> Lazzarato, *The Making of Indebted Man*, 31.

systemic one. However, since the credit relation appears to be a private one, i.e. the relation between private individuals and private institutions (banks that issue loans), the problem of debt is very quickly taken to be a private matter of the borrowers who are ‘fiscally irresponsible.’ As an article on debt in *Guardian* puts it, when debt is discussed “the focus continues to be exclusively on the irresponsible borrower, with complete immunity for the totally reckless lender or the enormous leech-like industry which continues to feed on the interest or ‘economic value’ created by shifting fictional money around.”<sup>214</sup> Debtors themselves are not free from this misconception, either. When they are not able to meet the obligations to repay, debtors are led to blame themselves for the decision they made in the past to take out loans, even if it was inevitably necessary due to structural inequalities.<sup>215</sup> The seemingly private nature of debt leads to the moralization of its obligation; the failure in repayment of debt results in shame, feeling of guilt or self-reproach, all of which are considered to be moral feelings that presuppose a particular process of ‘doubling’ in the subject. One needs to develop an ideal against which one can be critical of the self, in order to generate moral judgments about herself. The critical self-judgment and heightened conscience often lead the debtors to depression.

Keeping the social nature and psychological effects of debt in mind, I will articulate the process of subjectification under the condition of debt, by defining the particular ‘doubling’ in the production of indebted subjects. Drawing on the moralization of debt and the affective subjectification process, I will claim that the debt-based economy produces a

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<sup>214</sup> Alex Andreou, “If you think you know what ‘debt’ is, read on,” *Guardian*, July 29, 2013. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/jul/29/think-you-know-what-debt-is>

<sup>215</sup> Some obvious examples include debts incurred from student loans and health service in the United States, which are inseparable from the systems of education and health care. For a philosophical analysis of student loan debt and subject formation, see for example, Maurizio Lazzarato, “The American University: A Model of the Debt Society,” in *Governing by Debt*, trans. Joshua D. Jordan (Pasadena: Semiotext(e), 2015), and Hollis Phelps, “Parasites on unwilling hosts: student loan debt and the generation of value, *Continental Thought & Theory*, Vol.1(2), 2017: 383-405.

‘melancholic subjectivity.’ I use melancholia as a model to describe the pathological form of temporality that one experiences under the structure of power surrounding debt.

### **Subjection to power: ‘doubling’ or ‘turning back on itself’ in conscience**

In our previous discussion of debt, we have noted the moralization of the obligation to repay the debt and the development of conscience. In order to elaborate further on the ‘doubling’ and the role of conscience in the process of subject formation, I will turn to Judith Butler’s theory of subjection. She understands subjection (*assujettissement*) as “the process of becoming subordinated by power as well as the process of becoming a subject,”<sup>216</sup> which seems to be in line with Deleuze and Guattari’s concept of subjectification, except that the subjugation or subordination to power is much more primary and fundamental in Butler’s account of subject formation.<sup>217</sup> She thinks that the theories of subjection developed by Foucault as well as Althusser demonstrate the subject’s necessary relation to power in its formation, but do not explain the mechanisms of power in the psyche. Since our goal here is to theorize the process of subjectification through debt, the discussion will be centered on 1) the internalization of power through the doubling (recoiling) of the will and 2) the melancholic character of this internalization process.

In the *Psychic Life of Power*, Butler shows how crucial the recoiling of the will or the will’s ‘turning back upon itself’ – what Deleuze called a doubling – is in the production of the subject. In the chapter on Freud and Nietzsche, she discusses the subject formation in relation to conscience, which is understood as the effect of an internalized inhibition.

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<sup>216</sup> Judith Butler, *The Psychic Life Of Power: Theories in Subjection* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), 2. Mark G.E. Kelly accuses Butler of misinterpreting Foucault “by running the concepts of subjection and subjectivation together, indeed using them interchangeably, believing ‘subjectivation’ to be ‘a translation of the French *assujettissement* (Butler 1997, 11)” (Mark G.E. Kelly, *The Political Philosophy of Michel Foucault* (New York and London: Routledge, 2010), 88-91).

<sup>217</sup> She says, “[w]hether by interpellation in Althusser’s sense, or by discursive productivity, in Foucault’s, the subject is initiated through a primary submission to power” (ibid.).

According to Butler, both for Freud and Nietzsche, prohibition turns drive or instinct back on itself, fabricating reflexivity and the condition for self-inspection. With conscience, the subject becomes an object of itself, a reflexive being. She claims that a subject is formed only as a consequence of reflexivity. Subjection marks certain limit in the production of the subject. Butler writes,

Bad conscience would be the fabrication of interiority that attends the breaking of a promise, the discontinuity of the will, but the “I” who would keep the promise is precisely the cultivated effect of this continuous fabrication of interiority.<sup>218</sup>

As previously noted, for the debtor to make and keep the promise, a memory has to be created, and it has to persist. It is the need for such persistence that requires a development of continued consciousness/ conscience – both of which are ‘*conscience*’ in French. In this sense, the memory of debt inscribed in the mind serves as a point of subjectification, in Deleuze’s terms, that constitutes the debtor as the ‘I.’

Nietzsche’s conscience as ‘the will turning back upon itself’ forms the ground for the emergence of a sovereign individual. It is a protracted will and the coherence between the past promise and future actions that render a person ‘responsible.’ Butler says, “Nietzsche offers us a political insight into the formation of the psyche and the problem of subjection, understood paradoxically not merely as the subordination of a subject to a norm, but as the constitution of a subject through precisely such a subordination.”<sup>219</sup> We may say that one, by submitting herself to the debtor-creditor relation, is produced as a responsible economic subject: the subjectification through debt.

The originality of Butler’s theory of subjection and conscience lies in the analysis of what she calls, ‘constitutive melancholia.’ For Butler, melancholy is inseparable from the

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<sup>218</sup> Ibid. 75.

<sup>219</sup> Ibid. 66.



process of subject formation; the production of a subject involves gender identifications, and the formation of gender is an inherently melancholic process. A gendered subject is produced by internalizing gender norms, specifically, the prohibition on homosexual desire. The foreclosure of homosexuality grounds the constitution of a heterosexual subject, but such ‘ungrievable loss’ marks the limit of the subject’s reflexivity. Following Freud, Butler sees heightened conscience and self-reproaches as distinguishing features of melancholia that indicates an uncompleted grief. According to her, “the account of melancholy is an account of how psychic and social domains are produced in relation to one another.”<sup>220</sup>

Butler’s account of subjection and melancholia shows how the guilty conscience plays a key role in the production of the subject. Just as Butler emphasized the melancholic process of gender identification in the subject formation, I will elucidate the specific temporality of this ‘constitutive melancholia’ in subjection, and that it is the key in the production of indebted subjects.

## **2.2 Subjectification through debt: Melancholic temporality**

According to the research conducted in 2015 by the Political Economy Research Centre at Goldsmiths University of London, there is ample evidence that establishes a causal relationship between indebtedness and depression.<sup>221</sup> Proving such causality is not our concern here, but the descriptions of the debtors’ temporal experience are worth our attention. The study presents an analysis of the online peer-to-peer forums, which shows

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<sup>220</sup> Ibid. 167.

<sup>221</sup> William Davies, Johnna Montgomerie & Sara Wallin, “Financial Melancholia: Mental Health and Indebtedness,” 2015 (Retrieved from [http://www.perc.org.uk/project\\_posts/financial-melancholia-mental-health-and-indebtedness/](http://www.perc.org.uk/project_posts/financial-melancholia-mental-health-and-indebtedness/); see also John Gathergood, “Debt and depression: causal links and social norm effects,” *Economic Journal* 122 (2012): 1094-1114; Mind, “In the red: Debt and mental health,” 2008. Retrieved from <http://www.mind.org.uk/media/273469/in-the-red.pdf>; Royal College of Psychiatrists and the Money advice trust, “Debt collection and mental health: The evidence report,” (London: Royal College of Psychiatrists, 2010). Retrieved from <http://malg.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Debt-Collection-and-Mental-Health-TheEvidence-Report.pdf>;

that the indebted feel powerless and incapable of acting deliberately towards the future, trapped by past debt obligations.<sup>222</sup>

I propose that we consider melancholia as a model of the temporal psychic structure of the indebted. I aim to present melancholia as a constitutive, ‘transcendental’ psychic structure that is inseparable from the historical condition of financial capitalism, rather than as a phenomenological description of the indebted subject’s experience of melancholic feelings. I use the studies in psychopathology on melancholia to identify its distinct temporal characteristics, however, as will be shown in the next section, my discussion of melancholia as a temporal structure bears little on clinical depression. The defining features of melancholia such as heightened conscience and moral feelings of guilt and self-reproach that we learn from psychopathology will prove useful in our consideration of the affective effects of debt and its implications for temporality. As Butler notes, melancholia is “the limit to the subject’s sense of *pouvoir*, its sense of what it can accomplish and in that sense, its power.”<sup>223</sup> The production of a ‘melancholic subjectivity’ through debt will show that the subjection to the power structure of debt marks the limit of one’s becoming in time.

In his classical account of melancholia in ‘Mourning and Melancholia,’ Freud talks about ‘the melancholic inhibition’ that accompanies what is not seen in mourning: self-reproach and self-abasement. There is a feeling of guilt, or ‘a delusion of (mainly moral) inferiority’ of the self.<sup>224</sup> Freud writes: “In the clinical picture of melancholia, dissatisfaction with the ego on moral grounds is the most outstanding feature.”<sup>225</sup> The melancholic

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<sup>222</sup> Ibid. 12.

<sup>223</sup> Butler, *The Psychic Life Of Power*, 23.

<sup>224</sup> Sigmund Freud, “Mourning and Melancholia” in *The Standard Edition of The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Vol. XIV*, ed. J. Strachey (London: Hogarth Press and Institute of Psychoanalysis, 2001 [1914]), 243-258, 246.

<sup>225</sup> Ibid. 247-248.

develops a highly critical view of oneself that even extends back over the past. What we see here is the ego that ‘takes it as its object’ by setting itself over against the other: development of conscience as the major institutions of the ego. According to Freud, such internal work consumes the ego as much as mourning does, where one suffers from an identifiable loss in regard to a specific object. Melancholia too could be caused by a loss, but the melancholic may not be consciously aware of what it is that has been lost.

It is important to note here that the feeling of guilt necessarily involves a certain way of understanding time; guilt arises from the irreversibility of what had been done and the inability to proceed into the future. Fuchs, a phenomenological psychiatrist, interestingly describes how the death of a close person may cause guilt to us; as long as the person is alive, there is a possibility of making up for what we failed to do for him, but this possibility vanishes with death.<sup>226</sup> In this sense, it is the impossibility of the future that generates guilt. Fuchs also notes that this feeling of guilt is central to the melancholic depression; the melancholic has such feelings not only about a deceased person, but about everyone. They experience time as ‘no longer’ and suffer from a dominance of the past and from a failure to achieve forgetting. They lack interests or needs that would direct them toward the future. Although it is unavoidable for everyone to carry the weight of the past to some extent, for the melancholic, the overall possibility of renewing oneself in the present or any possibility of change is closed off with the overshadowing past. It is an “inhibition of vital becoming”<sup>227</sup> that defines the temporality of the melancholic.

Fuchs explains depressive psychopathology through ‘synchronization,’ a term borrowed from chronobiology that concerns circadian rhythms such as sleep-wake cycles

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<sup>226</sup> Thomas Fuchs, “Melancholia as a Desynchronization,” *Psychopathology*, Vol. 34 (2001): 179-186.

<sup>227</sup> Ibid., 179; we will see the implications of this coincidentally Bergson-Deleuzian term that Fuchs uses here later in the section 3.3 ‘Capital and the inhibition of becoming.’

and hormone release. He argues that melancholic depression can be best understood as a desynchronization in the intersubjective time.

The desynchronisation also becomes manifest in a failure to achieve forgetting and elimination of the past. 'Everything goes through my head again and again, and I always have to wonder if I did things right,' as a patient described it. It is the torture of not being able to forget, of being constantly forced to remember and therefore not arriving at the present any more.<sup>228</sup>

The melancholic experiences time as if their time gets stuck or slows down, whereas the time of others goes on. They feel the discrepancy between the 'ego-time' and the 'world time.' What causes the inhibition of becoming, or lived time is 'ever-growing guilt' that necessarily causes an exclusion of themselves from others. "Guilt, instead of being an intersubjective relation that can be dealt with, becomes a thing or an object the patient is identified with."<sup>229</sup>

Again, it is not my concern here to prove the causal relation between debt and melancholic depression, but to develop a theory of subject formation with respect to a specific temporality imposed by a socio-economic system. We saw earlier that the debtor-creditor relation is temporal in its nature, and the internalization of indebtedness in the psyche of the debtor leads to a moral feeling of guilt. Drawing on the description of melancholia in psychopathology, where the affect state of guilt prevails, I claim that the condition of indebtedness produces a certain form of subjectivity that can be best

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<sup>228</sup> Thomas Fuchs, "Psychopathology of depression and mania: symptoms, phenomena and syndromes," *Journal of Psychopathology* 20 (2014): 404-413, 409.

<sup>229</sup> Ibid., 408. For further studies on time disorders in depression in phenomenological psychology or psychiatry, see Minkowski, *Lived Time: Phenomenological and Psychopathological Studies* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1970), 297-298, Straus E. W., "Disorders of personal time in depressive states," *Southern Medical Journal* 40 (1947): 254-259, Ratcliffe, "Varieties of Temporal Experience in Depression," *Journal of Medicine and Philosophy*, 37 (2012): 113-138, all of which focuses on the altered temporal experience specific to depression, specifically how time is experienced as 'slowed down.'; see also Frederick T. Melges. *Time and the Inner Future: A Temporal Approach to Psychiatric Disorders*. New York: John Wiley, 1982, and Marcin Moskalewicz, "Disturbed temporalities: Insights from phenomenological psychiatry," *Time & Society*, Vol. 25(2) (2016): 234-252.

characterized by the temporality of the melancholic. I define the melancholic temporality as the dominance of the past and the inability to proceed into the future. And I will call the subject produced by this particular temporality, a ‘melancholic subjectivity.’

In this section, we have described the process of subject formation through debt, by looking at the subjection to power in the debtor-creditor relationship and the temporality of debt and guilt. What we have left to examine is the particular temporal structure that constitutes the indebted as a melancholic subject. By the temporal structure I mean the way in which the present is understood in relation to the past and the future, which frames the production of subjectivity. For this inquiry we will return to Deleuze’s passive syntheses, where the temporal structure that produces the subject is specifically elucidated. In our attempt to bring the socio-economic temporality and ontological notion of time together, we will discuss how certain social relation and systemically imposed temporality could transform one’s experience of time, and further, obstruct new possibilities of becoming.

### **3. The Production of Melancholic Subjects: The Passive Syntheses Revisited**

We have seen that debt as a social relation operates on the moral obligations arising from a past promise, which necessarily effectuates a temporal control over the subjects involved.

While the indebted suffers from a failure to proceed into the future, her own guilty conscience keeps her subjected to the weight of the past. In this last section, I hope to show how debt functions as a point of subjectification by analyzing the temporal structure under which a melancholic subject emerges. I shall revisit Deleuze’s account of the passive syntheses of time discussed in Chapter two to demonstrate the particular process of subjectification under the time subordinated to financial capital. Deleuze notes that when

time is constituted as the future in the third synthesis, it ceases to be subordinated to movement and becomes an empty form through which the new appears. Yet we will see that the temporality of the melancholic subject, in its failure to proceed beyond the second synthesis of the past, remains subordinated to the movement of capital.

Our return to the passive syntheses at this time will be useful for the following reasons: First, Deleuze sees time as a structure that produces subjectivity, rather than as a subjective form of experience. This will allow us to consider the process of subject formation under socio-economic temporalities, systemically imposed upon the subject. Second, Deleuze's passive synthesis of time, as my reading suggests, shows how crucial memory is in subject formation, in terms of habit-memory, recollection-memory, and forgetting. Thus it sheds light on the account of subjectification through the memory of indebtedness required for the promise for repayment, or the 'forgetting of forgetting.'

### **3.1 Memory of debt: Bare repetition of the past**

In his account of the three passive syntheses that correspond to the present, past and future, Deleuze shows that the operation of repetition – which occurs *in* the mind, but is not performed *by* the mind – constitutes time as well as the subject. The moment in the syntheses that interests us the most, for our discussion of debt and memory, is the transition from the second synthesis of the past to the third synthesis of the future.<sup>230</sup> Let us return to

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<sup>230</sup> As noted in Chapter II, 'Transition' here does not imply an order of occurrence. Each synthesis provides an explanation for all three temporal modalities, but describes the others as the dimensions (elements of synthesis) of a particular modality of time discussed. For example, the first synthesis of the present discusses the past and the future as its dimensions: "Time is constituted only in the originary synthesis which operates on the repetition of instants. [...] The past and the future do not designate instants distinct from a supposed present instant, but rather the dimensions of the present itself in so far as it is a contraction of instants" (DR 70-71/97). From the present to the past, and from the past to the future, the moments of transition are important in that they present the reasons why the previous synthesis is insufficient and what calls for the next synthesis.

the passage that we discussed earlier,<sup>231</sup> where Deleuze summarizes the three syntheses and describes the relationship between them:

The first synthesis, that of habit, constituted time as a living present by means of a passive foundation on which past and future depended. The second synthesis, that of memory, constituted time as a pure past, from the point of view of a ground which causes the passing of one present and the arrival of another. In the third synthesis, however, the present is no more than an actor, an author, an agent destined to be effaced; while the past is no more than a condition operating by default. The synthesis of time here constitutes a future which affirms at once both the unconditioned character of the product in relation to the conditions of its production, and the independence of the work in relation to its author or actor (DR 93-94/125).

Here Deleuze defines the synthesis of the future as a product that resembles neither its author (the present) nor its condition (the past). This way of delineating the future raises a number of questions: If an act is independent of the actor, how could it be attributed to the actor? In the same way, if the product is free of the condition of production, how does it stand in relation to *its* condition? If it is tied neither to the present nor the past, what is it a future *of*?

Let us briefly review the argument in the first two syntheses to see why the present functions as an agent and the past as a condition. According to Deleuze, the preliminary operation that founds time and subjectivity is ‘contraction.’ A succession of instants is not enough to form dimensions of the present; there has to be an activity of ‘contracting’ passing instants into one another. This pre-reflective activity of contraction in the mind, drawing a relation between independent instants that succeed one another, enables us to form habits. The first synthesis of habit as the foundation (*fondation*) of time constitutes the present in time, and what Deleuze calls an originary subjectivity. But the first synthesis requires as its condition another time that causes the present to pass – the second synthesis of memory.

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<sup>231</sup> See Section 2.4 “The third synthesis of the future” in Chapter II.

Following Bergson's paradoxes of past, Deleuze notes that the past has to be contemporaneous and coexistent with the present; for the present moment to pass, it has to be past 'at the same time' as it is present. It follows that since each past is contemporaneous with the present, all past is coexistent with the present. If the past is presupposed by a new present, we need to speak of the past that never was present, namely 'pure past.' In this synthesis, a present moment is only a dimension of the past, more precisely, a contraction of the entire past that coexists with it (DR 82/112). The past, in this sense, is the ground (*fondement*) of time.

When Deleuze questions the being of pure past as a condition or ground of time in the section "Inadequacy of memory: the third synthesis of time" (DR 87/118), he seems to reveal how the indebted gets stranded in the past. Specifically, he accounts for a certain temporal structure, i.e., the relation of the present to the past that the debtor is subjected to. As noted earlier, in the second synthesis a present moment is considered as the most contracted state of the entire past. Does this mean that the present is a mere repetition of the past? According to Deleuze, each present contracts the entire past as a coexisting totality, but at a different level or degree: "[F]reedom lies in choosing levels" (DR 83/113). There are two kinds of repetition in terms of which the present can be thought in relation to the past: the bare and the clothed repetition. The former concerns a repetition of independent instants reappearing at different times, and the latter a repetition of the Whole on the various coexisting levels. The clothed repetition can be called a repetition of difference; it is a repetition of the pure past understood as the open whole that can be repeated or contracted differently in each present moment. Bare repetition, however, concerns a return of the same. As in Plato's doctrine of reminiscence, it is the replaying of past events. The



pure past here is reduced to ‘a *mythical* present’ in the sense that it can be brought back to the mind by recovering what we have forgotten. Pure past, understood as such, puts time in a circular form (DR 88/119).

I believe it is this bare repetition of the past that constitutes the present for the indebted. Once the subjectification through debt is transformed into subjection to power, that is, one’s mental reality is taken over by the dominant reality, the fact of indebtedness functions as a pure past that overshadows the present. Pure past loses its original meaning as virtual coexistence that produces difference in each new repetition, but instead introduces a circle of time to the debtor – the circle that ties any present moment back to a particular event in the past. The debtor’s conscience brings back the memory of her promise to pay back and replay it incessantly in her mind. In short, the indebted is deprived of the freedom to choose at which level he would repeat the past. If we see the condition of indebtedness as a limit to the freedom to choose levels, we could say that the indebted are trapped in repeating a particular level of contraction in the whole. This level, the fact of indebtedness, would be empirically represented as a former present in the active synthesis of memory, but at the same time, it constitutes the ‘ever-increasing coexistence of levels’ within passive synthesis as it is actualized repeatedly in a present present.

One might argue that the structure of time that the passive syntheses introduce is purely ontological, thus it is not subject to the historical condition of capitalism. It is true that the originality of Deleuze’s account of the syntheses lies in the *insubordination* of time to the subject; time is, rather, *constitutive* of the subject. However, it is my contention that our understanding of the structure of time as a condition for the subject formation would be limited if Deleuze’s passive synthesis is understood independently of the social and

historical context. As previously shown, the ‘doubling’ of the present and the past that take a central place in his account of temporal synthesis extends in his later works to the socio-political process of subjectification. More straightforwardly, we see already in *Difference and Repetition* examples of repetition that engage in historical events. Regarding the two kinds of repetition discussed above, Deleuze gives the example of Marx’s theory of historical repetition (DR 90-92/121-123) – the Revolution of 1789 and the Romans. Here he emphasizes the difference between the clothed repetition of the historical *condition* under which a past that was never present (‘the new’) appears, and the bare repetition of a historical *fact* which concerns only empirical correspondences between two presents – a present present and a former present. This seems to suggest the possibility of conceiving ‘the virtual coexistence of the whole’ as the social and historical condition rather than as a purely ontological structure.

Understanding the temporal structure of the historical condition as ‘the transcendental’ does not necessarily imply that its psychological manifestations would be same in all of its empirical subjects. As a historical condition, capitalism *subjectivates* in a number of different ways. I am articulating a specific mode of subjectification here, the subjectification through debt. I have emphasized that there is a temporal structure of debt that determines the present’s relation to the past in a particular way and demonstrated this structure with the idea of bare repetition in the second synthesis describes the dominance of the past as a characteristic of the indebted.

### 3.2 Temporality of 'no longer': Failed synthesis of the future

Let us now proceed to the third synthesis that constitutes time as future. Here we will see the contrast between the synthesis of the future as a time liberated from movement and the melancholic temporality subordinated to the movement of capital. We saw earlier that the third synthesis concerns an act that supersedes both the condition (past) and the agent (present). In relation to the present as the foundation (*fondation*) of time and the past as the ground (*fondement*), Deleuze calls the synthesis of the future 'ungrounding (*effondement*) or groundless (*sans-fond*).'<sup>1</sup> Recall that the three stages of the process of ungrounding: (1) The 'before': a time at which the imagined act is supposed 'too big for me,' which determines the *a priori* past, the before. (2) The 'during': The second time is the present of metamorphosis or a doubling of the self to become equal to the act. (3) The 'after': In the third time where future appears, the act becomes coherent, leaving the self 'fractured' (DR 89/120-121).

We have seen that Deleuze develops the idea of the doubling within the subject in reference to Kant's notion of time. Kant discusses the problem of the split between 'the I' and the self by defining time as an empty form. Kant observed that there is a split between 'the I' as a thinking subject and 'the I' as an object that is thought' when we try to intuit ourselves: 'the I' can be given to me only as I *appear* to myself, rather than as I am in itself (CPR, B156). According to Kant, we intuit ourselves only as we are internally affected by ourselves, that is, by the affection of a passive self. It is under the form of time that we affect ourselves. From Kant's notion of time as a form of auto-affection, Deleuze derives the idea that '[t]ime signifies a fault or a fracture in the I (*Je*) and a passivity in the self (*moi*)' (DR 86). The three moments above are translated into Kant's terms as a synthesis of the active I

and the passive self: (1) the I, conditioned by the past, (2) the doubling of the self and the I in the present, and (3) the self, going beyond the condition, that becomes unequal to the I.

But if this temporal synthesis concerns the fracture, why is it called a *synthesis*? What does it synthesize? We have noted that the third synthesis differs from the first two, in that it concerns the relationship between the two precedent syntheses. The three moments aforementioned express this relation. The first moment concerns the virtual, passive self, (memory), where the action is beyond ('too big for') the subject. In the second moment, the actual, active I in the present attempts to bring the passive self under its unity ('becoming equal to the action'). In the third moment only the act remains coherent and both the active I and the passive self dissolve in the failed attempt to unify. The subject becomes an 'Other' by transcending itself. Whatever was synthesized by habit and memory are loosened in this synthesis. The act divides the before and the after, and 'the I' and the self into two unequal parts. To state simply, the third synthesis shows the fracture in time through which the subject in the present becomes capable of an act that exceeds its past condition.

For Deleuze, time as auto-affection is a *form*, in the sense that it is no longer subordinate to movement or to a substance to which the movement is attributed. It is not simply the *a priori* form of intuition that expresses the interiority of time in the mind, but "the most radical form of change" (DR 89/120) that concerns the constitution of the mind itself. Understood as such, time goes beyond the time of the subject, since it is the form through which the subject is determined in the self-affection: Time is "the formal possibility" of the affection by oneself.<sup>232</sup> If phenomenological inquiries into temporality as 'lived time'

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<sup>232</sup> "If the I determines our existence as a passive self changing in time, time is the formal relation through which the mind affects itself, or the way we are internally affected by ourselves. Time can thus be defined as the Affect of the self by itself, or at least as *the formal possibility* of being affected by oneself" (Deleuze, *Essays*)

pushed the limit of what we called ‘substance-based’ notion of time, Deleuze’s challenges the very notion of unity of the subject. The doubling or the fracture forms ‘the essential structure of subjectivity.’

But what about the future does this synthesis illuminate? Since Deleuze explains the future as a *formal* possibility, the synthesis does not concern what will happen, or what is supposed to happen in time. Rather, it concerns the very structure of time that institutes the fracture in the subject. The ontological structure of time itself that bifurcates between the present and the past constitutes the *doubling* in every being, which the subject is only a product of. In Deleuze, we do not begin with the subject that unfolds in time or the consciousness constituting the intentional object of phenomenological experience. Instead we begin with an impersonal force of repetition that contracts different elements and synthesize them as what we call ‘the subject.’ By showing the primordial time structure prior to the subject, the third synthesis reminds us what the subject is in the first place: the fracture as the un-conditioning condition that returns every moment.

The transition from the synthesis of the past to that of the future describes the necessary split in the subject between the fractured I and the self by the force of time. The subject is constituted in the genuine sense of the ‘open’ future only in its becoming capable of the act – the act of transgression, in Derrida’s term – beyond the condition. Now, let us consider a concrete model of subjectification. I argue that in the subjectification through debt, the transition from the second to the third is hardly present, thus the third synthesis of the future fails. Under the time subordinated to the movement of capital, it is the debtor’s conscience that results in a split between ‘the I’ as the inescapable condition and the self as

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*Critical and Clinical*, trans. Daniel W. Smith and Michael Greco (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997) 31, emphasis added).

the incapable agent. In this failed synthesis, future no longer opens up and the subject falls back into the circle of the past that never disappears. However, the sense of 'failure' here needs clarification. It has to be noted that the third synthesis is already a failed synthesis, insofar as the synthesis concerns unity. Thus when I say the failure of the third synthesis in the indebted, I do not mean a failure in the synthetic unity of the subject, but a failure to achieve 'the fracture' in the subject. Debt as a social relation institutes a temporal structure that prohibits the un-grounding of the ground (the past) of the subject. What the indebted is unable to achieve is not a future considered as a projection (or prolongation) of the present that the active I has a control over, but a future that allows the subject the formal possibility of a radical break from itself. The problem with the temporality of debt lies in the fact that it produces an all too well-grounded, well-unified form of the subject: the persistence of Memory.

We discussed the implications of the fracture in the subject in ontological terms, i.e. the production of novelty, or Forgetting as the ontological renewability. However, articulating the future as 'the open' or 'the new' seems too vague and general to elucidate its failure in the subjectification through debt. Not having a completely open future is not specific enough to define the temporality of the indebted. Given the intersections between the two accounts of subjectification we have examined thus far, it is important to consider how 'the production of novelty' in the temporal account of subject formation can be translated into the political subjectification through power. As the second synthesis deformed as bare repetition, the failure of the synthesis of the future demonstrates how the temporality of debt transforms the subjectification into the subjection of power. As stated earlier, the relation of the present with the past as a virtual coexistence concerns the

question of freedom – ‘To what extent the present repeats the past’ – and the third synthesis defines the condition of freedom in terms of the fracture in the subject. The formal possibility of the affection of the self, allowing the subject to exceed its own condition, can be translated into the formal possibility of freedom in the socio-political subjectification. Therefore, the failure of the third synthesis does not simply express the failure of the ‘open’ future as a mere ideal, but of the concrete possibility of political and economic freedom.

Some might argue that debt, in fact, enables the possibilities of the future, for those who are deprived of self-generating financial capital. There is perhaps some truth to that claim. It is through debt that what is not readily available becomes something achievable; it is through student loan that I can get my education. It is through mortgage loan that I can live in a house that does not belong to me. It is through my credit card debt that I can get medical treatment that I cannot afford at the moment. However, it is also through debt that we buy into the idea that education, housing and health care are what we are supposed to earn in exchange of our ‘open’ future, rather than what we have rights to have. It is through debt that the subject is put into a battle with herself. Once indebted, the subjects must take the responsibility solely for themselves despite the fact that debt was built into the system as a general, necessary condition. It is through debt that even “the most disadvantaged creature [by the system]” (AO 229/275) *voluntarily* submits herself to the system.

Where then does the future lie in this time subordinated to capital? I believe that it is now capital itself, no longer subordinated to the movement of commodities that replaces time’s creative force to self-differentiate: the productive force of time is manifested in financial capital in its self-generation. This idea of capital as a logic of time resonates with what Deleuze and Alliez call ‘abstract time’ of capital. In his conversation with Alliez at the

1984 seminar, Deleuze defines the abstract time as (1) a uniform, homogenous time that forms a straight line, and (2) a time abstracted from movement.<sup>233</sup> ‘Homogenous time’ and ‘time as a straight line’ normally do not belong together in Deleuze’s account of time, since the former indicates ‘spatialized,’ quantified time that is secondary to movement, whereas the latter concerns time that produces difference, liberated from movement.<sup>234</sup> But here, the two seemingly contradicting terms come together to define the ‘abstract’ time of capital that is productive *despite* being quantitative – a time subordinated to the ‘aberrant movement’ of capital that produces difference, but only *quantitative* difference. In their discussion of abstract time, Alliez and Deleuze refer to the transition from the C-M-C’ to the M-C-M’ and the M-M’. The M-C-M’ is an unequal or dissymmetrical exchange of money for more money that puts an end to a circular economic movement of commodity exchange. Then the straight line of the M-M’-M’’ circuit conveys the liberation of time with respect to the movement of exchange. Deleuze notes that the production of novelty belongs to the realm of capital: “Through what time perpetually produces something new? More money. Ever more money.”<sup>235</sup> In Alliez’s terms, the transition can be understood as the development of three different figures of time: movement-time (*temps-mouvement*), abstract time (*temps abstrait*), and power-time (*temps -puissance*). The emergence of capital renders time abstract, independent of movement of commodity exchanges. As the capital begins to self-

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<sup>233</sup> La voix de Gilles Deleuze, *Vérité et temps*, February 7, 1984.

<sup>234</sup> In our discussion of multiplicities in Chapter I, the homogeneous character was attributed to space, as a homogeneous and quantitative multiplicity. Thus homogeneous time would be adequate to describe a ‘spatialized’ time – or, time subordinated to the spatial understanding of movement. In contrast, the image of a straight line was used to describe Deleuze’s idea of time as a force to produce difference in its self-differentiation, opposed to repetition that forms a circular image of time. This time as a straight line, liberated from movement, was what defined the third synthesis of the future.

<sup>235</sup> Ibid. See also C2, 77-78/104; “If it is true that movement maintains a set of exchanges or an equivalence, a symmetry as an invariant, time is by nature the conspiracy of unequal change or the impossibility of an equivalence. It is in this sense that it is money: in Marx’s two formulations, C-M-C is that of equivalence, but M-C-M is that of impossible equivalence or tricked, dissymmetrical exchange.”



differentiate in the circulation of credit money, time gains a ‘machinic power.’<sup>236</sup> Hence, power-time. In his book *Capital Times*, Alliez draws a more explicit link between the time of capital and the third synthesis:

If money bears within itself an ineffaceable debit, it is because time, converted into the money form, is discovered as an empty form, a pure order of time, quantitative and differential, measurable and coinable, which nothing can come to fill.<sup>237</sup>

As Alliez points out, the capitalist universe emerges by conquering time. And this conquest culminates in the process of temporal subjectification. When subordinated to the movement of capital, the power of time to produce novelty serves capital’s reproduction. Under the time of capital the subjectification as temporal syntheses is restricted, and take the form of the subjection to a rigid temporal structure.

### **3.3. Capital and the inhibition of becoming: Debt as the ‘memory of the future’**

For Deleuze, time is the self-differentiation of virtual, ontological memory. The virtual memory, or ‘time as a whole’ is repeated in each present moment, but never as the same. The subject is constituted as the product of the temporal syntheses in that it is always in the process of being determined by the relations of the present state of the self (the actual) to the past and the future selves (the virtual), which always exceed one’s individual consciousness. The distinction Deleuze draws between two kinds of memory is thus crucial in subjectification. The empirical memory relative to consciousness is opposed to forgetting, whereas virtual Memory, or absolute memory is *with* Forgetting. In Deleuze’s passive syntheses, the latter concerns the condition for the possibility of the future, or the ontological renewability of the subject.

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<sup>236</sup> Éric Alliez, Les séminaires de Félix Guattari, *Trois figures du temps*, December 13, 1983.

<sup>237</sup> Éric Alliez, *Capital Times: Tales from the Conquest of Time*, trans. George van den Abbeele (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996. 13.

Now, consider the role of Forgetting as the possibility of the future in relation to the subjectification process through debt. Let us remind that for the debtor-creditor relationship to be established, memory as the ability to make promises is required. As we noted earlier, this is a particular kind of memory – it is not a simple remembrance of a past event, but the one straining toward the future. Deleuze calls it the “commitment to the future and memory of the future itself,” (NP 134/209) which is against our natural forgetfulness. It is the memory in the sense of a ‘persistent awareness’ of the condition of indebtedness.

‘The remembrance of the future (*souvenir du futur*)’ inscribed on the debtor’s conscience should be distinguished from ‘the memory of the future (*la mémoire du futur*)’ that Deleuze relates to ‘absolute memory’ in his book on Foucault.<sup>238</sup> The French word ‘*souvenir*’ indicates an individual memory or recollection, whereas ‘*mémoire*’ refers to the faculty of memory, or the entirety of what can be recalled by it, part of which is *souvenir*.<sup>239</sup> The former binds the debtor’s future to the past promise, in determining the future as a repetition of the past, and as a reliving of the memory. The latter indicates the force of time (Forgetting) that pushes the subject beyond the determinations of the ‘I’ in the present and beyond the ossified memories; the ‘different repetition’ of virtual memory in every moment forms the very condition of the future. Deleuze is very clear on this point when he says, with regard to the doubling in subjectification, “[i]t is not a reproduction of the Same, but a repetition of the Different” (F 98/105). If the former concerns *subordination*, where the fact of indebtedness overshadows the debtor’s decisions for the future, the latter relates to *subjectification* as the ‘doubling’ of the present and the virtual memory, or “the formation of

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<sup>238</sup> See F 107/114

<sup>239</sup> We may recall here the Bergsonian distinction between memory-images and pure memory that we discussed earlier. In his example of our experience of learning a lesson by heart, Bergson says “At this precise moment, I know my lesson by heart; some say that it has become a memory (*souvenir*), that it is imprinted on my memory (*mémoire*) (MM 79).

the self through techniques of living, not of repression through prohibition and law.”<sup>240</sup> The memory of the future as subordination instigates a melancholic temporalization of the subject, characterized as the inability to forget and the inhibition of becoming.

This is, of course, not to say that any promise or commitment to the future produces one as a melancholic subject. As emphasized earlier, subjectification is supposed to occur between dominant reality and mental reality, between the past (Memory) and the future (Forgetting), and between subordination and freedom. What we observe here in the production of indebted subjects is the transformation of subjectification into subjection, where the condition of indebtedness becomes one’s dominant reality. What I have tried to demonstrate is how debt goes beyond financial obligation and operates as a technique of control without any apparent spatial confinement, that is, by imposing an anomalous temporal structure. With an emphasis on the moralization of debt, I saw the temporality of indebtedness as essentially melancholic, however, it could well be described in terms of other affects, such as anxiety, shame or fear.

Lastly, it is perhaps worth considering the temporality of the melancholic in comparison with that of the schizophrenic to see how capital replaces time’s force to produce difference, especially given that Deleuze and Guattari describe the logic of capitalism with the model of schizophrenia. In their critique of the normalizing tendency of Freudian treatment, they note that schizophrenia cannot be explained by a fundamental lack – the Oedipus complex. The schizophrenic, having no center or unified identity as a subject, is incapable of experiencing lack. They contend that capitalism is comparable to schizophrenia as it continues to escape its immanent limit by pushing itself beyond it, and

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<sup>240</sup> Michel Foucault, “Subjectivity and Truth” in *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth*. Trans. Robert Hurley et al. (New York: The New Press, 1997), 87-92, 89.

thus it can insert itself into any cultural, economic, and social system. Interestingly, the temporality of the schizophrenic, due to its 'de-centeredness,' is defined by an inability to experience continuity or by being in a passing present. If monetary flows form "schizophrenic realities" as Deleuze and Guattari claim (AO 246/296), the temporal logic of capital would also be marked by a perpetual present in its self-generation. As Fredric Jameson puts it, this present is "a disengagement from the shackles of the past (the family and, in particular, Freud's conception of the Oedipus complex) as well as from those of the future (the routine of the labor process under capitalism)." <sup>241</sup> If the schizophrenic temporality, characterized as a 'perpetual present,' effectively describes the temporal logic of capital, we may say that melancholic subjectivity is seen as a failed synchronization with the schizophrenic movement of capital. Time subordinated to monetary movement constitutes the present in capital, rather than in the subject: Capital becomes capable of taking itself beyond the condition and produces the new, while the melancholic subject recedes into the past.

In this chapter, we have looked at the account of subjectification, shown in Deleuze's solo works and in his collaboration with Guattari. In order to develop a Deleuzian theory of subject formation under financial capitalism, I have attempted to identify the temporal logic of capital and its workings in the new form of social subordination, the debtor-creditor relation. In his critique of time subordinated to movement, Deleuze proposes a notion of time that is not attributed to individual substances, a time that produces qualitative difference in its self-differentiation. Yet we have seen that time in the circulation of financial

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<sup>241</sup> Fredric Jameson, "The End of Temporality," *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 29, No. 4 (2003): 695-718, 710.

capital serves as that which generates quantitative difference in monetary value. Thus I claimed that the productive force of time is replaced by capital in its self-generation. Time, subordinated to capital, only results in the asymmetry between the accumulation of capital on the one side, and the multiplication of debt on the other. By analyzing the case of the indebted, I have established a model of subjectivity produced by internalizing the externally imposed temporal structure. From the moralization of debt arises the feeling of guilt, which shapes the temporal experience of the indebted. I have shown that for the indebted, deprived of financial capital that generates itself over time, time is no longer constituted as future, but only as a dominant past. Based on the essential function of guilty conscience in the constitution of 'the I' that is found both in melancholia and indebtedness, I called the subject produced through debt a melancholic subjectivity.

## **Conclusion: Financial Melancholia**

The main claim of this dissertation is that financial capitalism as a debt-based economy produces a melancholic subjectivity, by imposing on its subjects a certain structure of time. I have supported this claim, using Deleuze's theory of time and his account of subject formation. Deleuze's passive synthesis of time presents time as a constitutive of the subject rather than a subjective form of time, thus explains how the subject can be passively produced by time. He also provides an account of the subject formation through capital, the process that he calls, 'subjectification.' Specifically, this inquiry consisted of the three main tasks: (1) a critical role of temporality in the formation of the subject, (2) a specific temporality characteristic of contemporary financial capitalism, and (3) the pathologies of time found in the subjects of capitalism.

First we have examined the relationship between time and subjectivity.

We began with Deleuze's claim that time was traditionally understood in terms of movement. Following Bergson, Deleuze presents a critique of 'time subordinated to movement' and suggests that we reconceive time as a self-differentiation. Instead of thinking time based on individual substances, Deleuze suggests that we think of it as 'a whole' that goes through qualitative change, which individual substances are only the manifestations of. Such a whole is 'the open,' as it becomes something other than itself in its qualitative change. Since the whole has nothing external to it, the only movement observed in it would be the movement of 'self-differentiation.' We saw that time, in this sense, is a vehicle for the production of difference, through which any substance – including the subject – is produced. Having shown that Deleuze develops his notion of time by synthesizing Bergson's concept

of duration and Kant's auto-affection, I argued that Deleuze's critique of traditional theories of time was to reconceive the relation between time and the subject.

Having established the notion of the subject as a temporal production instead of a substance that survives changes, we moved on to Deleuze's account for the production of the subjectivity in time. In our analysis of Deleuze's passive syntheses of time, we saw how time functions as a structure in the process of subject formation. I focused specifically on Deleuze's treatment of memory, which he claims to be central in the temporal process of subjectification. While examining how the present relates to the past and to the future in the subject, I claimed that the concept of 'Memory' (or pure past) that Deleuze develops from Bergson's theory of virtual memory, and his take on the Nietzschean concept of 'Forgetting' each plays a crucial role. We saw that the present is produced by a temporal synthesis; if the ontological Memory represents a repetition of the entire past coexisting with the present, Forgetting makes this repetition as a repetition of the different. The subject is a product of certain temporal relations, with differing degrees of repetition and novelty. By means of understanding the production of subjectivity through the Memory-Forgetting, Deleuze reconstructs Kant's empirical-transcendental relation through the actual-virtual schema.

Then we examined the relationship between time and subjectivity in a specific socio-economic system, financial capitalism. We explored in the ways in which time is subordinated to monetary movement, especially the movement of interest-bearing capital. Unlike the monetary circulation for commodity exchange that is a finite transaction, the self-expanding movement of financial capital is potentially limitless. With the self-generating capital, time expresses its power via so-called 'inherent monetary value,' that concerns a production of quantitative difference. Capital's self-generation over time results

in the asymmetry between the creditor and the debtor. We also saw that the promise the debtor makes requires memory, memory as a function of the future. In our analysis of Deleuze's reading of Foucault's notion of subjectification, we saw how the temporal relations in Memory/ Forgetting and the sociopolitical relations of power intersect. I demonstrated how indebtedness becomes a point of subjectification *par excellence* under capitalism, while it engages both aspects of the subject formation process. By instituting the promise, the memory of the future, the condition of indebtedness inhibits one from certain possibilities of the future, or *becoming*. With the moralization of debt that generates guilt, the indebted turns against herself and. Based on the psychopathological analyses of melancholia that suggest the dominance of the past and the inability to forget as its defining characteristics, I claimed that the subjectification through debt as a principally temporal process produces melancholic subjectivity.

Deleuze once said that his last book was going to be called, *La Grandeur de Marx* [The Grandeur of Marx].<sup>242</sup> Unfortunately the book was never completed, but as Éric Alliez says, “we can take comfort from the possibility of thinking that this *virtual Marx*, this philosophically clean-shaven Marx that Deleuze alludes to in the opening pages of *Difference and Repetition*.”<sup>243</sup> In his remarks on the creative utilization of the history of philosophy, Deleuze says that we should be able to “recount a real book of past philosophy as if it were an imaginary and feigned book” (DR, xxi/4). This dissertation, as a version of Deleuze's unwritten story of Marx, illustrates one of the many virtual Marxes. It presents, in analyzing Deleuze and Guattari's reading of Marx through Brunhoff, the contemporary relevance of

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<sup>242</sup> “Le ‘Je me souviens’ de Gilles Deleuze,” interview with Didier Eribon *Le Nouvel Observateur* No. 1619 (1995): 50-51. 51.

<sup>243</sup> Éric Alliez, “Questionnaire on Deleuze,” *Theory, Culture and Society* 14(2)(1997): 81–87, 81



Marx's theory of money, while problematizing the system of debt/credit in the current form of capitalism.

This imaginary book of Deleuze's Marx also explores the possibility of developing a coherent theory of subject formation in time in Deleuze's work, by putting his early writings on time and his later works created with Guattari on capitalism in conversation with one another. In doing so, it goes beyond Deleuze's description of capitalism, in that it analyzes the problem of debt in its effect on the dominant temporality of one's lived experience. We suggested melancholia as a model for the pathological form of temporal experience, found in the indebted subjects.

The kinship between melancholia and subject formation established in our study of financial melancholia should point us beyond the economic realm. The affective aspect of subjectification can be further developed in various directions. My future research shall advance the idea of melancholic subjectification specifically in the formation of a gendered, racialized subjectivity. I hope to theorize the affective process of racial assimilation in the United States. Assimilation as the internalization of power, or a 'voluntary' subjection to power, involves a denial of the self and the sense of 'unfitting' that creates a feeling of shame and guilt. The loss of the self in the mechanisms of racial subjectification seems to suggest that it can be an inherently melancholic process.

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